THE LOST ROAD

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

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THE LOST ROAD

"It is an enchanted road," said the girl; "or maybe we are enchanted"

THE LOST ROAD

BY

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

ILLUSTRATED BY

WALLACE MORGAN

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TO
MY WIFE

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Lost Road	1
The Miracle of Las Palmas	33
Evil to Him Who Evil Thinks	67
The Man of Zanzibar	101
The Long Arm	149
The God of Coincidence	171
The Buried Treasure of Cobre	207

ILLUSTRATIONS

"It is an enchanted road," said the girl; "or maybe we are enchanted" . . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

Directly under his nose was a tarnished silver loving-cup 26

He found it like being perpetually in a comic opera . 106

"I know only one thing—two things, that I love you and that, until you love me, I am going to make your life hell!" 126

"You mustn't get her mixed up with anything I told you about her brother" 222

"Some day I will tell you," said the young man . . 226

THE LOST ROAD

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DURING the war with Spain, Colton Lee came into the service as a volunteer. For a young man, he always had taken life almost too seriously, and when, after the campaign in Cuba, he elected to make soldiering his profession, the seriousness with which he attacked his new work surprised no one. Finding they had lost him forever, his former intimates were bored, but his colonel was enthusiastic, and the men of his troop not only loved, but respected him.

From the start he determined in his new life women should have no part—a determination that puzzled no one so much as the women, for to Lee no woman, old or young, had found cause to be unfriendly. But he had read that the army is a jealous mistress who brooks no rival, that "red lips tarnish the scabbard steel," that "he travels the fastest who travels alone."

So, when white hands beckoned and pretty eyes signalled, he did not look. For five years, until just before he sailed for his three years of duty

in the Philippines, he succeeded not only in not looking, but in building up for himself such a fine reputation as a woman-hater that all women were crazy about him. Had he not been ordered to Agawamsett that fact would not have affected him. But at the Officers' School he had indulged in hard study rather than in hard riding, had overworked, had brought back his Cuban fever, and was in poor shape to face the tropics. So, for two months before the transport was to sail, they ordered him to Cape Cod to fill his lungs with the bracing air of a New England autumn.

He selected Agawamsett, because, when at Harvard, it was there he had spent his summer vacations, and he knew he would find sailboats and tennis and, through the pine woods back of the little whaling village, many miles of untravelled roads. He promised himself that over these he would gallop an imaginary troop in route marches, would manœuvre it against possible ambush, and, in combat patrols, ground scouts, and cossack outposts, charge with it "as foragers." But he did none of these things. For at Agawamsett he met Frances Gardner, and his experience with her was so disastrous that, in his determination to avoid all women, he was convinced he was right.

When later he reached Manila he vowed no

other woman would ever again find a place in his thoughts. No other woman did. Not because he had the strength to keep his vow, but because he so continually thought of Frances Gardner that no other woman had a chance.

Miss Gardner was a remarkable girl. Her charm appealed to all kinds of men, and, unfortunately for Lee, several kinds of men appealed to her. Her fortune and her relations were bound up in the person of a rich aunt with whom she lived, and who, it was understood, some day would leave her all the money in the world. But, in spite of her charm, certainly in spite of the rich aunt, Lee, true to his determination, might not have noticed the girl had not she ridden so extremely well.

It was to the captain of cavalry she first appealed. But even a cavalry captain, whose duty in life is to instruct sixty men in the art of taking the life of as many other men as possible, may turn his head in the direction of a good-looking girl. And when for weeks a man rides at the side of one through pine forests as dim and mysterious as the aisles of a great cathedral, when he guides her across the wet marshes when the sun is setting crimson in the pools and the wind blows salt from the sea, when he loses them both by moonlight in wood-roads where the hoofs of

the horses sink silently into dusty pine needles, he thinks more frequently of the girl at his side than of the faithful troopers waiting for him in San Francisco. The girl at his side thought frequently of him.

With the "surface indications" of a young man about to ask her to marry him she was painfully familiar; but this time the possibility was the reverse of painful. What she meant to do about it she did not know, but she did know that she was strangely happy. Between living on as the dependant of a somewhat exacting relative and becoming the full partner of this young stranger, who with men had proved himself so masterful, and who with her was so gentle, there seemed but little choice. But she did not as yet wish to make the choice. She preferred to believe she was not certain. She assured him that before his leave of absence was over she would tell him whether she would remain on duty with the querulous aunt, who had befriended her, or as his wife accompany him to the Philippines.

It was not the answer he wanted; but in her happiness, which was evident to every one, he could not help but take hope. And in the questions she put to him of life in the tropics, of the life of the "officers' ladies," he saw that what was

in her mind was a possible life with him, and he was content.

She became to him a wonderful, glorious person, and each day she grew in loveliness. It had been five years of soldiering in Cuba, China, and on the Mexican border since he had talked to a woman with interest, and now in all she said, in all her thoughts and words and delights, he found fresher and stronger reasons for discarding his determination to remain wedded only to the United States Army. He did not need reasons. He was far too much in love to see in any word or act of hers anything that was not fine and beautiful.

In their rides they had one day stumbled upon a long-lost and long-forgotten road through the woods, which she had claimed as their own by right of discovery, and, no matter to what point they set forth each day, they always returned by it. Their way through the woods stretched for miles. It was concealed in a forest of stunted oaks and black pines, with no sign of human habitation, save here and there a clearing now long neglected and alive only with goldenrod. Trunks of trees, moss-grown and crumbling beneath the touch of the ponies' hoofs, lay in their path, and above it the branches of a younger generation had

clasped hands. At their approach squirrels raced for shelter, woodcock and partridge shot deeper into the net-work of vines and saplings, and the click of the steel as the ponies tossed their bits, and their own whispers, alone disturbed the silence.

"It is an enchanted road," said the girl; "or maybe we are enchanted."

"Not I," cried the young man loyally. "I was never so sane, never so sure, never so happy in knowing just what I wanted! If only you could be as sure!"

One day she came to him in high excitement with a book of verse. "He has written a poem," she cried, "about our own woods, about our lost road! Listen!" she commanded, and she read to him:

"'They shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the coppice and heath,
And the thin anemones.
Only the keeper sees
That, where the ringdove broods,
And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.

"'Yet, if you enter the woods
Of a summer evening late,
When the night air cools on the trout-ringed pools
Where the otter whistles his mate
(They fear not men in the woods
Because they see so few),
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,
As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods. . . .
But there is no road through the woods.'"

"I don't like that *at all*," cried the soldier-man. "It's too—too sad—it doesn't give you any encouragement. The way it ends, I mean: 'But there is no road through the woods.' *Of course* there's a road! For us there always will be. I'm going to make sure. I'm going to buy those woods, and keep the lost road where we can always find it."

"I don't think," said the girl, "that he means a *real* road."

"I know what he means," cried the lover, "and he's wrong! There *is* a road, and you and I have found it, and we are going to follow it for always."

The girl shook her head, but her eyes were smiling happily.

The "season" at Agawamsett closed with the tennis tournament, and it was generally conceded fit and proper, from every point of view, that in mixed doubles Lee and Miss Gardner should be partners. Young Stedman, the Boston artist, was the only one who made objection. Up in the sail-loft that he had turned into a studio he was painting a portrait of the lovely Miss Gardner, and he protested that the three days' tournament would sadly interrupt his work. And Frances, who was very much interested in the portrait, was inclined to agree.

But Lee beat down her objections. He was not at all interested in the portrait. He disapproved of it entirely. For the sittings robbed him of Frances during the better part of each morning, and he urged that when he must so soon leave her, between the man who wanted her portrait and the man who wanted her, it would be kind to give her time to the latter.

"But I had no idea," protested Frances, "he would take so long. He told me he'd finish it in three sittings. But he's so critical of his own work that he goes over it again and again. He says that I am a most difficult subject, but that I inspire him. And he says, if I will only give him time, he believes this will be the best thing he has done."

"That's an awful thought," said the cavalry officer.

"You don't like him," reproved Miss Gardner. "He is always very polite to you."

"He's polite to everybody," said Lee; "that's why I don't like him. He's not a real artist. He's a courtier. God gave him a talent, and he makes a mean use of it. Uses it to flatter people. He's like these long-haired violinists who play anything you ask them to in the lobster palaces."

Miss Gardner looked away from him. Her color was high and her eyes very bright.

"I think," she said steadily, "that Mr. Stedman is a *great* artist, and some day all the world will think so, too!"

Lee made no answer. Not because he disagreed with her estimate of Mr. Stedman's genius—he made no pretence of being an art critic—but because her vehement admiration had filled him with sudden panic. He was not jealous. For that he was far too humble. Indeed, he thought himself so utterly unworthy of Frances Gardner that the fact that to him she might prefer some one else was in no way a surprise. He only knew that if she should prefer some one else not all his troop horses nor all his men could put Humpty Dumpty back again.

But if, in regard to Mr. Stedman, Miss Gardner had for a moment been at odds with the man who loved her, she made up for it the day following on the tennis court. There she was in accord with him in heart, soul, and body, and her sharp "Well played, partner!" thrilled him like one of his own bugle calls. For two days against visiting and local teams they fought their way through the tournament, and the struggle with her at his side filled Lee with a great happiness. Not that the championship of Agawamsett counted greatly to one exiled for three years to live among the Moros. He wanted to win because she wanted to win. But his happiness came in doing something in common with her, in helping her and in having her help him, in being, if only in play, if only for three days, her "partner."

After they won they walked home together, each swinging a fat, heavy loving-cup. On each was engraved:

"Mixed doubles, Agawamsett, 1910."

Lee held his up so that the setting sun flashed on the silver.

"I am going to keep that," he said, "as long as I live. It means you were once my 'partner.' It's a sign that once we two worked together for something and *won*." In the words

the man showed such feeling that the girl said soberly:

"Mine means that to me, too. I will never part with mine, either."

Lee turned to her and smiled, appealing wistfully.

"It seems a pity to separate them," he said. "They'd look well together over an open fireplace."

The girl frowned unhappily. "I don't *know*," she protested. "I don't *know*."

The next day Lee received from the War Department a telegram directing him to "proceed without delay" to San Francisco, and there to embark for the Philippines.

That night he put the question to her directly, but again she shook her head unhappily; again she said: "I don't *know!*"

So he sailed without her, and each evening at sunset, as the great transport heaved her way across the swell of the Pacific, he stood at the rail and looked back. With the aid of the first officer he calculated the difference in time between a whaling village situated at forty-four degrees north and an army transport dropping rapidly toward the equator, and so, each day, kept in step with the girl he loved.

"Now," he would tell himself, "she is in her cart in front of the post-office, and while they sort the morning mail she gossips with the fisher folks, the summer folks, the grooms, and chauffeurs. Now she is sitting for her portrait to Stedman" (he did not dwell long on that part of her day), "and now she is at tennis, or, as she promised, riding alone at sunset down our lost road through the woods."

But that part of her day from which Lee hurried was that part over which the girl herself lingered. As he turned his eyes from his canvas to meet hers, Stedman, the charming, the deferential, the adroit, who never allowed his painting to interrupt his talk, told her of what he was pleased to call his dreams and ambitions, of the great and beautiful ladies who had sat before his easel, and of the only one of them who had given him inspiration. Especially of the only one who had given him inspiration. With her always to uplift him, he could become one of the world's most famous artists, and she would go down into history as the beautiful woman who had helped him, as the wife of Rembrandt had inspired Rembrandt, as "Mona Lisa" had made Leonardo.

Gilbert wrote: "It is not the lover who comes to woo, but the lover's *way* of wooing!" His suc-

cessful lover was the one who threw the girl across his saddle and rode away with her. But one kind of woman does not like to have her lover approach shouting: "At the gallop! Charge!"

She prefers a man not because he is masterful, but because he is not. She likes to believe the man needs her more than she needs him, that she, and only she, can steady him, cheer him, keep him true to the work he is in the world to perform. It is called the "mothering" instinct.

Frances felt this mothering instinct toward the sensitive, imaginative, charming Stedman. She believed he had but two thoughts, his art and herself. She was content to place his art first. She could not guess that to one so unworldly, to one so wrapped up in his art, the fortune of a rich aunt might prove alluring.

When the transport finally picked up the landfalls of Cavite Harbor, Lee, with the instinct of a soldier, did not exclaim: "This is where Dewey ran the forts and sank the Spanish fleet!" On the contrary, he was saying: "When she comes to join me, it will be here I will first see her steamer. I will be waiting with a field-glass on the end of that wharf. No, I will be out here in a shore-boat waving my hat. And of all those along the rail, my heart will tell me which is she!"

Then a barefooted Filipino boy handed him an unsigned cablegram. It read: "If I wrote a thousand words I could not make it easier for either of us. I am to marry Arthur Stedman in December."

Lee was grateful for the fact that he was not permitted to linger in Manila. Instead, he was at once ordered up-country, where at a one-troop post he administered the affairs of a somewhat hectic province, and under the guidance of the local constabulary chased will-o'-the-wisp brigands. On a shelf in his quarters he placed the silver loving-cup, and at night, when the village slept, he would sit facing it, filling one pipe after another, and through the smoke staring at the evidence to the fact that once Frances Gardner and he had been partners.

In these post-mortems he saw nothing morbid. With his present activities they in no way interfered, and in thinking of the days when they had been together, in thinking of what he had lost, he found deep content. Another man, having lost the woman he loved, would have tried to forget her and all she meant to him. But Lee was far too honest with himself to substitute other thoughts for those that were glorious, that still thrilled him. The girl could take herself from

him, but she could not take his love for her from him. And for that he was grateful. He never had considered himself worthy, and so could not believe he had been ill used. In his thoughts of her there was no bitterness: for that also he was grateful. And, as he knew he would not care for any other woman in the way he cared for her, he preferred to care in that way, even for one who was lost, than in a lesser way for a possible she who some day might greatly care for him. So she still remained in his thoughts, and was so constantly with him that he led a dual existence, in which by day he directed the affairs of an alien and hostile people and by night again lived through the wonderful moments when she had thought she loved him, when he first had learned to love her. At times she seemed actually at his side, and he could not tell whether he was pretending that this were so or whether the force of his love had projected her image half around the world.

Often, when in single file he led the men through the forest, he seemed again to be back on Cape Cod picking his way over their own lost road through the wood, and he heard "the beat of a horse's feet and the swish of a skirt in the dew." And then a carbine would rattle, or a horse would

stumble and a trooper swear, and he was again in the sweating jungle, where men, intent upon his life, crouched in ambush.

She spared him the mockery of wedding-cards; but the announcement of the wedding came to him in a three-months-old newspaper. Hoping they would speak of her in their letters, he kept up a somewhat one-sided correspondence with friends of Mrs. Stedman's in Boston, where she now lived. But for a year in none of their letters did her name appear. When a mutual friend did write of her Lee understood the silence.

From the first, the mutual friend wrote, the life of Mrs. Stedman and her husband was thoroughly miserable. Stedman blamed her because she came to him penniless. The rich aunt, who had heartily disapproved of the artist, had spoken of him so frankly that Frances had quarrelled with her, and from her no longer would accept money. In his anger at this Stedman showed himself to Frances as he was. And only two months after their marriage she was further enlightened.

An irate husband made him the central figure in a scandal that filled the friends of Frances with disgust, and that for her was an awakening cruel and humiliating. Men no longer permitted their womenfolk to sit to Stedman for a portrait, and

the need of money grew imperative. He the more blamed Frances for having quarrelled with her aunt, told her it was for her money he had married her, that she had ruined his career, and that she was to blame for his ostracism—a condition that his own misconduct had brought upon him. Finally, after twelve months of this, one morning he left a note saying he no longer would allow her to be a drag upon him, and sailed for Europe.

They learned that, in Paris, he had returned to that life which before his marriage, even in that easy-going city, had made him notorious. "And Frances," continued Lee's correspondent, "has left Boston, and now lives in New York. She wouldn't let any of us help her, nor even know where she is. The last we heard of her she was in charge of the complaint department of a millinery shop, for which work she was receiving about the same wages I give my cook."

Lee did not stop to wonder why the same woman, who to one man was a "drag," was to another, even though separated from her by half the world, a joy and a blessing. Instead, he promptly wrote his lawyers to find Mrs. Stedman, and, in such a way as to keep her ignorant of their good offices, see that she obtained a position more congenial than her present one, and one

that would pay her as much as, without arousing her suspicions, they found it possible to give.

Three months had passed, and this letter had not been answered, when in Manila, where he had been ordered to make a report, he heard of her again. One evening, when the band played on the *Luneta*, he met a newly married couple who had known him in Agawamsett. They now were on a ninety-day cruise around the world. Close friends of Frances Gardner, they remembered him as one of her many devotees and at once spoke of her.

"That blackguard she married," the bridegroom told him, "was killed three months ago racing with another car from Versailles back to Paris after a dinner at which, it seems, all present drank 'burgundy out of the finger-bowls.' Coming down that steep hill into Saint Cloud, the cars collided, and Stedman and a woman, whose husband thought she was somewhere else, were killed. He couldn't even die without making a scandal of it."

"But the worst," added the bride, "is that, in spite of the way the little beast treated her, I believe Frances still cares for him, and always will. That's the worst of it, isn't it?" she demanded.

In words, Lee did not answer, but in his heart he

agreed that was much the worst of it. The fact that Frances was free filled him with hope; but that she still cared for the man she had married, and would continue to think only of him, made him ill with despair.

He cabled his lawyers for her address. He determined that, at once, on learning it, he would tell her that with him nothing was changed. He had forgotten nothing, and had learned much. He had learned that his love for her was a splendid and inspiring passion, that even without her it had lifted him up, helped and cheered him, made the whole world kind and beautiful. With her he could not picture a world so complete with happiness.

Since entering the army he had never taken a leave of absence, and he was sure, if now he asked for one, it would not be refused. He determined, if the answer to his cable gave him her address, he would return at once, and again offer her his love, which he now knew was deeper, finer, and infinitely more tender than the love he first had felt for her. But the cable balked him. "Address unknown," it read; "believed to have gone abroad in capacity of governess. Have employed foreign agents. Will cable their report."

Whether to wait for and be guided by the report

of the detectives, or to proceed to Europe and search for her himself, Lee did not know. He finally determined that to seek for her with no clew to her whereabouts would be but a waste of precious moments, while, if in their search the agents were successful, he would be able to go directly to her. Meanwhile, by cable, he asked for protracted leave of absence and, while waiting for his answer, returned to his post. There, within a week, he received his leave of absence, but in a fashion that threatened to remove him forever from the army.

The constabulary had located the will-o'-the-wisp brigands behind a stockade built about an extinct volcano, and Lee and his troop and a mountain battery attempted to dislodge them. In the fight that followed Lee covered his brows with laurel wreaths and received two bullet wounds in his body.

For a month death stood at the side of his cot; and then, still weak and at times delirious with fever, by slow stages he was removed to the hospital in Manila. In one of his sane moments a cable was shown him. It read: "Whereabouts still unknown." Lee at once rebelled against his doctors. He must rise, he declared, and proceed to Europe. It was upon a matter of life and death.

The surgeons assured him his remaining exactly where he was also was a matter of as great consequence. Lee's knowledge of his own lack of strength told him they were right.

Then, from headquarters, he was informed that, as a reward for his services and in recognition of his approaching convalescence, he was ordered to return to his own climate and that an easy billet had been found for him as a recruiting officer in New York City. Believing the woman he loved to be in Europe, this plan for his comfort only succeeded in bringing on a relapse. But the day following there came another cablegram. It put an abrupt end to his mutiny, and brought him and the War Department into complete accord.

"She is in New York," it read, "acting as agent for a charitable institution, which one not known, but hope in a few days to cable correct address."

In all the world there was no man so happy. The next morning a transport was sailing, and, probably because they had read the cablegram, the surgeons agreed with Lee that a sea voyage would do him no harm. He was carried on board, and when the propellers first churned the water and he knew he was moving toward her, the hero of the fight around the crater shed unmanly tears. He would see her again, hear her voice; the same

great city would shelter them. It was worth a dozen bullets.

He reached New York in a snow-storm, a week before Christmas, and went straight to the office of his lawyers. They received him with embarrassment. Six weeks before, on the very day they had cabled him that Mrs. Stedman was in New York, she had left the charitable institution where she had been employed, and had again disappeared.

Lee sent his trunks to the Army and Navy Club, which was immediately around the corner from the recruiting office in Sixth Avenue, and began discharging telegrams at every one who had ever known Frances Gardner. The net result was discouraging. In the year and a half in which he had been absent every friend of the girl he sought had temporarily changed his place of residence or was permanently dead.

Meanwhile his arrival by the transport was announced in the afternoon papers. At the wharf an admiring trooper had told a fine tale of his conduct at the battle of the crater, and reporters called at the club to see him. He did not discourage them, as he hoped through them the fact of his return might be made known to Frances. She might send him a line of welcome, and he would discover her whereabouts. But, though

many others sent him hearty greetings, from her there was no word.

On the second day after his arrival one of the telegrams was answered in person by a friend of Mrs. Stedman. He knew only that she had been in New York, that she was very poor and in ill health, that she shunned all of her friends, and was earning her living as the matron of some sort of a club for working girls. He did not know the name of it.

On the third day there still was no news. On the fourth Lee decided that the next morning he would advertise. He would say only: "Will Mrs. Arthur Stedman communicate with Messrs. Fuller & Fuller?" Fuller & Fuller were his lawyers. That afternoon he remained until six o'clock at the recruiting office, and when he left it the electric street lights were burning brightly. A heavy damp snow was falling, and the lights and the falling flakes and the shouts of drivers and the toots of taxicabs made for the man from the tropics a welcome home-coming.

Instead of returning at once to his club, he slackened his steps. The shop windows of Sixth Avenue hung with Christmas garlands, and colored lamps glowed like open fireplaces. Lee passed slowly before them, glad that he had been

able to get back at such a season. For the moment he had forgotten the woman he sought, and was conscious only of his surroundings. He had paused in front of the window of a pawn-shop. Over the array of cheap jewelry, of banjos, shot-guns, and razors, his eyes moved idly. And then they became transfixed and staring. In the very front of the window, directly under his nose, was a tarnished silver loving-cup. On it was engraved "Mixed Doubles. Agawamsett, 1910." In all the world there were only two such cups, and as though he were dodging the slash of a bolo, Lee leaped into the shop. Many precious seconds were wasted in persuading Mrs. Cohen that he did not believe the cup had been stolen; that he was not from the Central Office; that he believed the lady who had pawned the cup had come by it honestly; that he meant no harm to the lady; that he meant no harm to Mrs. Cohen; that, much as the young lady may have needed the money Mrs. Cohen had loaned her on the cup, he needed the address of the young lady still more.

Mrs. Cohen retired behind a screen, and Lee was conscious that from the other side of it the whole family of Cohens were taking his measurements. He approved of their efforts to protect the owner of the cup, but not from him.

Directly under his nose was a tarnished silver loving-cup

He offered, if one of the younger Cohens would take him to the young lady, to let him first ask her if she would receive Captain Lee, and for his service he would give the young Cohen untold gold. He exhibited the untold gold. The young Cohen choked at the sight and sprang into the seat beside the driver of a taxicab.

"To the Working Girls' Home, on Tenth Street!" he commanded.

Through the falling snow and the flashing lights they slid, skidded, and leaped. Inside the cab Lee shivered with excitement, with cold, with fear that it might not be true. He could not realize she was near. It was easier to imagine himself still in the jungle, with months of time and sixteen thousand miles of land and water separating them; or in the hospital, on a white-enamel cot, watching the shadow creep across the white-washed wall; or lying beneath an awning that did not move, staring at a burning, brazen sea that did not move, on a transport that, timed by the beating of his heart, stood still.

Those days were within the radius of his experience. Separation, absence, the immutable giants of time and space, he knew. With them he had fought and could withstand them. But to be near her, to hear her voice, to bring his love into

her actual presence, that was an attack upon his feelings which found him without weapons. That for a very few dollars she had traded the cup from which she had sworn never to part did not concern him. Having parted from him, what she did with a silver mug was of little consequence. It was of significance only in that it meant she was poor. And that she was either an inmate or a matron of a lodging-house for working girls also showed she was poor.

He had been told that was her condition, and that she was in ill health, and that from all who loved her she had refused to accept help. At the thought his jaws locked pugnaciously. There was one who loved her, who, should she refuse his aid, was prepared to make her life intolerable. He planned in succession at lightning speed all he might do for her. Among other things he would make this Christmas the happiest she or he would ever know. Not for an instant did he question that she who had refused help from all who loved her could refuse anything he offered. For he knew it was offered with a love that demanded nothing in return, with a love that asked only to be allowed to love, and to serve. To refuse help inspired by such a feeling as his would be morbid, wicked, ridiculous, as though a flower refused to

turn its face to the sun, and shut its lips to the dew.

The cab stopped in front of a brick building adorned with many fire-escapes. Afterward he remembered a bare, brilliantly lit hall hung with photographs of the Acropolis, and a stout, capable woman in a cap, who looked him over and said:

"You will find Mrs. Stedman in the writing-room."

And he remembered entering a room filled with Mission furniture and reading-lamps under green shades. It was empty, except for a young girl in deep black, who was seated facing him, her head bent above a writing-desk. As he came into the circle of the lamps the girl raised her eyes and as though lifted to her feet by what she saw, and through no effort of her own, stood erect.

And the young man who had persuaded himself his love demanded nothing, who asked only to worship at her gate, found his arms reaching out, and heard his voice as though it came from a great distance, cry, "Frances!"

And the girl who had refused the help of all who loved her, like a homing pigeon walked straight into the outstretched arms.

After five minutes, when he was almost able to believe it was true, he said in his commanding,

masterful way: "And now I'm going to take you out of here. I'm going to buy you a ring, and a sable coat, and a house to live in, and a dinner. Which shall we buy first?"

"First," said Frances, frowning happily, "I am afraid we must go to the Ritz, to tell Aunt Emily. She always loved you, and it will make her so happy."

"To the Ritz!" stammered the young man. "To Aunt Emily! I thought they told me your aunt and—you——"

"We quarrelled, yes," said Frances, "and she has forgiven me; but she has not forgiven herself, so she spoils me, and already I *have* a house to live in, and several sable coats, and, oh! everything, everything but the ring."

"I am so sorry!" cried Lee. "I thought you were poor. I hoped you were poor. But you are joking!" he exclaimed delightedly. "You are here in a working girls' home——"

"It is one of Aunt Emily's charities. She built it," said Frances. "I come here to talk to the girls."

"But," persisted Lee triumphantly, "if you are *not* poor, *why* did you pawn our silver loving-cup?"

The face of the girl became a lovely crimson, and tears rose to her eyes. As though at a confessional, she lifted her hands penitently.

"Try to understand," she begged; "I wanted you to love me, *not* for my money——"

"But you knew!" cried Lee.

"I had to be *sure*," begged the girl; "and I wanted to believe you loved me even if I did not love you. When it was too late I knew you loved me as no woman ever deserved to be loved; and I wanted that love. I could not live without it. So when I read in the papers you had returned I wouldn't let myself write you; I wouldn't let myself beg you to come to see me. I set a test for you. I knew from the papers you were at the Army and Navy Club, and that around the corner was the recruiting office. I'd often seen the sergeant there, in uniform, at the door. I knew you must pass from your club to the office many times each day, so I thought of the loving-cup and the pawn-shop. I planted it there. It was a trick, a test. I thought if you saw it in a pawn-shop you would believe I no longer cared for you, and that I was very poor. If you passed it by, then I would know you yourself had stopped caring, but if you asked about it, if you inquired for me, then I would know you came to me of your own wish, because you——"

Lee shook his head.

"You don't have to tell *me*," he said gently,

"why I came. I've a cab outside. You will get in it," he commanded, "and we will rescue our cup. I always told you they would look well together over an open fireplace."

THE MIRACLE OF LAS PALMAS

THE MIRACLE OF LAS PALMAS

THIS is the story of a gallant officer who loved his profession, his regiment, his country, but above all, whiskey; of his miraculous conversion to total abstinence, and of the humble instrument that worked the miracle. At the time it was worked, a battalion of the Thirty-third Infantry had been left behind to guard the Zone, and was occupying impromptu barracks on the hill above Las Palmas. That was when Las Palmas was one of the four thousand stations along the forty miles of the Panama Railroad. When the railroad was "reconstructed" the name of Las Palmas did not appear on the new time-table, and when this story appears Las Palmas will be eighty feet under water. So if any one wishes to dispute the miracle he will have to conduct his investigation in a diving-bell.

On this particular evening young Major Aintree, in command of the battalion, had gone up the line to Panama to dine at the Hotel Tivoli, and had dined well. To prevent his doing this a paternal

government had ordered that at the Tivoli no alcoholic liquors may be sold; but only two hundred yards from the hotel, outside the zone of temperance, lies Panama and Angelina's, and during the dinner, between the Tivoli and Angelina's, the Jamaican waiter-boys ran relay races.

After the dinner, the Jamaican waiter-boys proving too slow, the dinner-party in a body adjourned to Angelina's, and when later, Major Aintree moved across the street to the night train to Las Palmas, he moved unsteadily.

Young Standish of the Canal Zone police, who, though but twenty-six, was a full corporal, was for that night on duty as "train guard," and was waiting at the rear steps of the last car. As Aintree approached the steps he saw indistinctly a boyish figure in khaki, and, mistaking it for one of his own men, he clasped the handrail for support, and halted frowning.

Observing the condition of the officer the policeman also frowned, but in deference to the uniform, slowly and with reluctance raised his hand to his sombrero. The reluctance was more apparent than the salute. It was less of a salute than an impertinence.

Partly out of regard for his rank, partly from temper, chiefly from whiskey, Aintree saw scarlet.

"When you s'lute your s'perior officer," he shouted, "you s'lute him quick. You unnerstan', you s'lute him *quick!* S'lute me again," he commanded, "and s'lute me damn quick."

Standish remained motionless. As is the habit of policemen over all the world, his thumbs were stuck in his belt. He answered without offence, in tones matter-of-fact and calm.

"You are *not* my superior officer," he said.

It was the calmness that irritated Aintree. His eyes sought for the infantryman's cap and found a sombrero.

"You damned leatherneck," he began, "I'll report——"

"I'm not a marine, either," interrupted Standish. "I'm a policeman. Move on," he ordered, "you're keeping these people waiting."

Others of the dinner-party formed a flying wedge around Aintree and crowded him up the steps and into a seat and sat upon him. Ten minutes later, when Standish made his rounds of the cars, Aintree saw him approaching. He had a vague recollection that he had been insulted, and by a policeman.

"You!" he called, and so loudly that all in the car turned, "I'm going to report you, going to report you for insolence. What's your name?"

Looking neither at Aintree nor at the faces turned toward him, Standish replied as though Aintree had asked him what time it was.

"Standish," he said, "corporal, shield number 226, on train guard." He continued down the aisle.

"I'll remember *you*," Aintree shouted.

But in the hot glaring dawn of the morning after, Aintree forgot. It was Standish who remembered.

The men of the Zone police are hand-picked. They have been soldiers, marines, cowboys, sheriffs, "Black Hussars" of the Pennsylvania State constabulary, rough riders with Roosevelt, mounted police in Canada, irregular horse in South Africa; they form one of the best-organized, best-disciplined, most efficient, most picturesque semi-military bodies in the world. Standish joined them from the Philippine constabulary in which he had been a second lieutenant. There are several like him in the Zone police, and in England they would be called gentlemen rankers. On the Isthmus, because of his youth, his fellow policemen called Standish "Kid." And smart as each of them was, each of them admitted the Kid wore his uniform with a difference. With him it always looked as though it had come freshly ironed from the Colon

laundry; his leather leggings shone like meerschaum pipes; the brim of his sombrero rested impudently on the bridge of his nose.

"He's been an officer," they used to say in extenuation. "You can tell when he salutes. He shows the back of his hand." Secretly, they were proud of him. Standish came of a long chain of soldiers, and that the weakest link in the chain had proved to be himself was a sorrow no one else but himself could fathom. Since he was three years old he had been trained to be a soldier, as carefully, with the same singleness of purpose, as the crown prince is trained to be a king. And when, after three happy, glorious years at West Point, he was found not clever enough to pass the examinations and was dropped, he did not curse the gods and die, but began again to work his way up. He was determined he still would wear shoulder-straps. He owed it to his ancestors. It was the tradition of his family, the one thing he wanted; it was his religion. He would get into the army even if by the side door, if only after many years of rough and patient service. He knew that some day, through his record, through the opportunity of a war, he would come into his inheritance. Meanwhile he officered his soul, disciplined his body, and daily tried to learn the lesson that he

who hopes to control others must first control himself.

He allowed himself but one dissipation, one excess. That was to hate Major Aintree, commanding the Thirty-third Infantry. Of all the world could give, Aintree possessed everything that Standish considered the most to be desired. He was a graduate of West Point, he had seen service in Cuba, in the Boxer business, and in the Philippines. For an act of conspicuous courage at Batangas, he had received the medal of honor. He had had the luck of the devil. Wherever he held command turned out to be the place where things broke loose. And Aintree always attacked and routed them, always was the man on the job. It was his name that appeared in the newspapers, it was his name that headed the list of the junior officers mentioned for distinguished conduct. Standish had followed his career with an admiration and a joy that was without taint of envy or detraction. He gloried in Aintree, he delighted to know the army held such a man. He was grateful to Aintree for upholding the traditions of a profession to which he himself gave all the devotion of a fanatic. He made a god of him. This was his attitude of mind toward Aintree before he came to the Isthmus. Up to

that time he had never seen his idol. Aintree had been only a name signed to brilliant articles in the service magazines, a man of whom those who had served with him or under him, when asked concerning him, spoke with loyalty and awe, the man the newspapers called "the hero of Batangas." And when at last he saw his hero, he believed his worship was justified. For Aintree looked the part. He was built like a greyhound with the shoulders of a stevedore. His chin was as projecting, and as hard, as the pointed end of a flat-iron. His every movement showed physical fitness, and his every glance and tone a confidence in himself that approached insolence. He was thirty-eight, twelve years older than the youth who had failed to make his commission, and who as Aintree strode past, looked after him with wistful, hero-worshipping eyes. The revulsion, when it came, was extreme. The hero-worship gave way to contempt, to indignant condemnation, in which there was no pity, no excuse. That one upon whom so much had been lavished, who for himself had accomplished such good things, should bring disgrace upon his profession, should by his example demoralize his men, should risk losing all he had attained, all that had been given, was intolerable. When Standish learned his hero was a

drunkard, when day after day Aintree furnished visible evidences of that fact, Standish felt Aintree had betrayed him and the army and the government that had educated, trained, clothed, and fed him. He regarded Aintree as worse than Benedict Arnold, because Arnold had turned traitor for power and money; Aintree was a traitor through mere weakness, because he could not say "no" to a bottle.

Only in secret Standish railed against Aintree. When his brother policemen gossiped and jested about him, out of loyalty to the army he remained silent. But in his heart he could not forgive. The man he had so generously envied, the man after whose career he had wished to model his own, had voluntarily stepped from his pedestal and made a swine of himself. And not only could he not forgive, but as day after day Aintree furnished fresh food for his indignation he felt a fierce desire to punish.

Meanwhile, of the conduct of Aintree, men older and wiser, if less intolerant than Standish, were beginning to take notice. It was after a dinner on Ancon Hill, and the women had left the men to themselves. They were the men who were placing the Panama Canal on the map. They were officers of the army who for five years had not worn a uni-

form. But for five years they had been at war with an enemy that never slept. Daily they had engaged in battle with mountains, rivers, swamps, two oceans, and disease. Where Aintree commanded five hundred soldiers, they commanded a body of men better drilled, better disciplined, and in number half as many as those who formed the entire army of the United States. The mind of each was occupied with a world problem. They thought and talked in millions—of millions of cubic yards of dirt, of millions of barrels of cement, of millions of tons of steel, of hundreds of millions of dollars of which latter each received enough to keep himself and his family just beyond the reach of necessity. To these men with the world waiting upon the outcome of their endeavor, with responsibilities that never relaxed, Aintree's behavior was an incident, an annoyance of less importance than an overturned dirt train that for five minutes dared to block the completion of their work. But they were human and loyal to the army, and in such an infrequent moment as this over the coffee and cigars they could afford to remember the junior officer, to feel sorry for him, for the sake of the army, to save him from himself.

"He takes his orders direct from the War Department," said the chief. "I've no authority

over him. If he'd been one of my workmen I'd have shipped him north three months ago."

"That's it," said the surgeon, "he's *not* a workman. He has nothing to do, and idleness is the curse of the army. And in this climate——"

"Nothing to do!" snorted the civil administrator. "Keeping his men in hand is what he has to do! They're running amuck all over Panama, getting into fights with the Spiggoty police, bringing the uniform into contempt. As for the climate, it's the same climate for all of us. Look at Butler's marines and Barber's Zone police. The climate hasn't hurt them. They're as smart men as ever wore khaki. It's not the climate or lack of work that ails the Thirty-third, it's their commanding officer. 'So the colonel, so the regiment.' That's as old as the hills. Until Aintree takes a brace, his men won't. Some one ought to talk to him. It's a shame to see a fine fellow like that going to the dogs because no one has the courage to tell him the truth."

The chief smiled mockingly.

"Then why don't you?" he asked.

"I'm a civilian," protested the administrator. "If I told him he was going to the dogs he'd tell me to go to the devil. No, one of you army men must do it. He'll listen to you."

Young Captain Haldane of the cavalry was at the table; he was visiting Panama on leave as a tourist. The chief turned to him.

"Haldane's the man," he said. "You're his friend and you're his junior in rank, so what you say won't sound official. Tell him people are talking; tell him it won't be long before they'll be talking in Washington. Scare him!"

The captain of cavalry smiled dubiously.

"Aintree's a hard man to scare," he said. "But if it's as bad as you all seem to think, I'll risk it. But, why is it," he complained, "that whenever a man has to be told anything particularly unpleasant they always pick on his best friend to tell him? It makes them both miserable. Why not let his bitterest enemy try it? The enemy at least would have a fine time."

"Because," said the chief, "Aintree hasn't an enemy in the world—except Aintree."

The next morning, as he had promised, Haldane called upon his friend. When he arrived at Las Palmas, although the morning was well advanced toward noon, he found Aintree still under his mosquito bars and awake only to command a drink. The situation furnished Haldane with his text. He expressed his opinion of any individual, friend or no friend, officer or civilian, who, on the Zone

where all men begin work at sunrise, could be found at noon still in his pajamas and preparing to face the duties of the day on an absinthe cocktail. He said further that since he had arrived on the isthmus he had heard only of Aintree's misconduct, that soon the War Department would hear of it, that Aintree would lose his commission, would break the backbone of a splendid career.

"It's a friend talking," concluded Haldane, "and you know it! It's because I *am* your friend that I've risked losing your friendship! And, whether you like it or not, it's the truth. You're going down-hill, going fast, going like a motor-bus running away, and unless you put on the brakes you'll smash!"

Aintree was not even annoyed.

"That's good advice for the right man," he granted, "but why waste it on me? I can do things other men can't. I can stop drinking this minute, and it will mean so little to me that I won't know I've stopped."

"Then stop," said Haldane.

"Why?" demanded Aintree. "I like it. Why should I stop anything I like? Because a lot of old women are gossiping? Because old men who can't drink green mint without dancing turkey-trots think I'm going to the devil because I

can drink whiskey? I'm not afraid of whiskey," he laughed tolerantly. "It amuses me, that's all it does to me; it amuses me." He pulled back the coat of his pajamas and showed his giant chest and shoulder. With his fist he struck his bare flesh and it glowed instantly a healthy, splendid pink.

"See that!" commanded Aintree. "If there's a man on the isthmus in any better physical shape than I am, I'll—" He interrupted himself to begin again eagerly. "I'll make you a sporting proposition," he announced. "I'll fight any man on the isthmus ten rounds—no matter who he is, a wop laborer, shovel man, Barbadian nigger, marine, anybody—and if he can knock me out I'll stop drinking. You see," he explained patiently, "I'm no mollycoddle or jelly-fish. I can afford a headache. And besides, it's my own head. If I don't give anybody else a headache, I don't see that it's anybody else's damned business."

"But you do," retorted Haldane steadily. "You're giving your own men worse than a headache, you're setting them a rotten example, you're giving the Thirty-third a bad name——"

Aintree vaulted off his cot and shook his fist at his friend.

"You can't say that to *me*," he cried.

"I *do* say it," protested Haldane. "When you were in Manila your men were models; here they're unshaven, sloppy, undisciplined. They look like bell-hops. And it's your fault. And everybody thinks so."

Slowly and carefully Aintree snapped his fingers.

"And you can tell everybody, from me," he cried, "that's all I care *what* they think! And now," he continued, smiling hospitably, "let me congratulate you on your success as a missionary, and, to show you there's not a trace of hard feeling, we will have a drink."

Informally Haldane reported back to the commission, and the wife of one of them must have talked, for it was soon known that a brother officer had appealed to Aintree to reform, and Aintree had refused to listen.

When she heard this, Grace Carter, the wife of Major Carter, one of the surgeons at the Ancon Hospital, was greatly perturbed. Aintree was engaged to be married to Helen Scott, who was her best friend and who was arriving by the next steamer to spend the winter. When she had Helen safely under her roof, Mrs. Carter had planned to marry off the young couple out of hand on the isthmus. But she had begun to wonder if

it would not be better they should delay, or best that they should never marry.

"The awakening is going to be a terrible blow to Helen," she said to her husband. "She is so proud of him."

"On the contrary," he protested, "it will be the awakening of Aintree—if Helen will stand for the way he's acting, she is not the girl I know. And when he finds she won't, and that he may lose her, he'll pull up short. He's talked Helen to me night after night until he's bored me so I could strangle him. He cares more for her than he does for anything, for the army, or for himself, and that's saying a great deal. One word from her will be enough."

Helen spoke the word three weeks after she arrived. It had not been necessary to tell her of the manner in which her lover was misconducting himself. At various dinners given in their honor he had made a nuisance of himself; on another occasion, while in uniform, he had created a scene in the dining-room of the Tivoli under the prying eyes of three hundred seeing-the-Canal tourists; and one night he had so badly beaten up a cabman who had laughed at his condition that the man went to the hospital. Major Carter, largely with money, had healed the injuries of the cab-

man, but Helen, who had witnessed the assault, had suffered an injury that money could not heal.

She sent for Aintree, and at the home of her friend delivered her ultimatum.

"I hit him because he was offensive to *you*," said Aintree. "*That's* why I hit him. If I'd not had a drink in a year, I'd have hit him just as quick and just as hard."

"Can't you see," said the girl, "that in being not yourself when I was in your care you were much more insulting to me than any cabman could possibly be? When you are like that you have no respect for me, or for yourself. Part of my pride in you is that you are so strong, that you control yourself, that common pleasures never get a hold on you. If you couldn't control your temper I wouldn't blame you, because you've a villainous temper and you were born with it. But you weren't born with a taste for liquor. None of your people drank. *You* never drank until you went into the army. If I were a man," declared the girl, "I'd be ashamed to admit anything was stronger than I was. You never let pain beat you. I've seen you play polo with a broken arm, but in this you give pain to others, you shame and humiliate the one you pretend to love, just because you are weak, just because you can't say 'no.'"

Aintree laughed angrily.

"Drink has no hold on me," he protested. "It affects me as much as the lights and the music affect a girl at her first dance, and no more. But, if you ask me to stop——"

"I do not!" said the girl. "If you stop, you'll stop not because I have any influence over you, but because you *don't need* my influence. If it's wrong, if it's hurting you, if it's taking away your usefulness and your power for good, *that's* why you'll stop. Not because a girl begs you. Or you're not the man I think you."

Aintree retorted warmly. "I'm enough of a man for this," he protested: "I'm enough of a man not to confess I can't drink without making a beast of myself. It's easy not to drink at all. But to stop altogether is a confession of weakness. I'd look on my doing *that* as cowardly. I give you my word—not that I'll swear off, that I'll never do—but I promise you you'll have no further reason to be what you call humiliated, or ashamed. You have my word for it."

A week later Aintree rode his pony into a railway cutting and rolled with it to the tracks below, and, if at the time he had not been extremely drunk, would have been killed. The pony, being quite sober, broke a leg and was destroyed.

When word of this came to Helen she was too sick at heart to see Aintree, and by others it was made known to him that on the first steamer Miss Scott would return North. Aintree knew why she was going, knew she had lost faith and patience, knew the woman he loved had broken with him and put him out of her life. Appalled at this calamity, he proceeded to get drunk in earnest.

The night was very hot and the humidity very heavy, and at Las Palmas inside the bungalow that served as a police-station the lamps on either side of the lieutenant's desk burned like tiny furnaces. Between them, panting in the moist heat and with the sweat from his forehead and hand dripping upon an otherwise immaculate report, sat Standish. Two weeks before, the chief had made him one of his six lieutenants. With the force the promotion had been most popular.

Since his promotion Standish had been in charge of the police-station at Las Palmas and daily had seen Aintree as, on his way down the hill from the barracks to the railroad, the hero of Batangas passed the door of the station-house. Also, on the morning Aintree had jumped his horse over the embankment, Standish had seen him carried up the hill on a stretcher. At the sight the lieu-

tenant of police had taken from his pocket a notebook, and on a flyleaf made a cross. On the flyleaf were many other dates and opposite each a cross. It was Aintree's record and as the number of black crosses grew, the greater had grown the resentment of Standish, the more greatly it had increased his anger against the man who had put this affront upon the army, the greater became his desire to punish.

In police circles the night had been quiet, the cells in the yard were empty, the telephone at his elbow had remained silent, and Standish alone in the station-house had employed himself in cramming "Moss's Manual for Subalterns." He found it a fascinating exercise. The hope that soon he might himself be a subaltern always burned brightly, and to be prepared seemed to make the coming of that day more certain. It was ten o'clock and Las Palmas lay sunk in slumber, and after the down train which was now due had passed, there was nothing likely to disturb her slumber until at sunrise the great army of dirt-diggers with shrieks of whistles, with roars of dynamite, with the rumbling of dirt-trains and steam-shovels, again sprang to the attack. Down the hill, a hundred yards below Standish, the night train halted at the station, with creakings and

groanings continued toward Colon, and again Las Palmas returned to sleep.

And, then, quickly and viciously, like the crack of a mule-whip, came the reports of a pistol; and once more the hot and dripping silence.

On post at the railroad station, whence the shots came, was Meehan, one of the Zone police, an ex-sergeant of marines. On top of the hill, outside the infantry barracks, was another policeman, Bullard, once a cowboy.

Standish ran to the veranda and heard the pebbles scattering as Bullard leaped down the hill, and when, in the light from the open door, he passed, the lieutenant shouted at him to find Meehan and report back. Then the desk telephone rang, and Standish returned to his chair.

"This is Meehan," said a voice. "Those shots just now were fired by Major Aintree. He came down on the night train and jumped off after the train was pulling out and stumbled into a negro, and fell. He's been drinking and he swore the nigger pushed him; and the man called Aintree a liar. Aintree pulled his gun and the nigger ran. Aintree fired twice; then I got to him and knocked the gun out of his hand with my night-stick."

There was a pause. Until he was sure his voice

would be steady and official, the boy lieutenant did not speak.

"Did he hit the negro?" he asked.

"I don't know," Meehan answered. "The man jumped for the darkest spot he could find." The voice of Meehan lost its professional calm and became personal and aggrieved.

"Aintree's on his way to see you now, lieutenant. He's going to report me."

"For what?"

The voice over the telephone rose indignantly.

"For knocking the gun out of his hand. He says it's an assault. He's going to *break* me!"

Standish made no comment.

"Report here," he ordered.

He heard Bullard hurrying up the hill and met him at the foot of the steps.

"There's a nigger," began Bullard, "lying under some bushes——"

"Hush!" commanded Standish.

From the path below came the sound of footsteps approaching unsteadily, and the voice of a man swearing and muttering to himself. Standish pulled the ex-cowboy into the shadow of the darkness and spoke in eager whispers.

"You understand," he concluded, "you will not report until you see me pick up a cigar from the

desk and light it. You will wait out here in the darkness. When you see me light the cigar, you will come in and report."

The cowboy policeman nodded, but without enthusiasm. "I understand, lieutenant," he said, "but," he shook his head doubtfully, "it sizes up to me like what those police up in New York call a 'frame-up.'"

Standish exclaimed impatiently.

"It's not *my* frame-up!" he said. "The man's framed himself up. All I'm going to do is to nail him to the wall!"

Standish had only time to return to his desk when Aintree stumbled up the path and into the station-house. He was "fighting drunk," ugly, offensive, all but incoherent with anger.

"You in charge?" he demanded. He did not wait for an answer. "I've been 'saulted!" he shouted. "'Saulted by one of your damned policemen. He struck me—struck me when I was protecting myself. He had a nigger with him. First the nigger tripped me; then, when I tried to protect myself, this thug of yours hits me, clubs me, you unnerstan', *clubs* me! I want him——"

He was interrupted by the entrance of Meehan, who moved into the light from the lamps and saluted his lieutenant.

"That's the man!" roared Aintree. The sight of Meehan whipped him into greater fury.

"I want that man broke. I want to see you strip his shield off him—*now*, you unnerstan', *now*—for 'saulting me, for 'saulting an officer in the United States army. And, if you *don't*," he threw himself into a position of the prize-ring, "I'll beat him up and you, too." Through want of breath, he stopped, and panted. Again his voice broke forth hysterically. "I'm not afraid of your damned night-sticks," he taunted. "I got five hundred men on top this hill, all I've got to do is say the word, and they'll rough-house this place and throw it into the cut—and you with it."

Standish rose to his feet, and across the desk looked steadily at Aintree. To Aintree the steadiness of his eyes and the quietness of his voice were an added aggravation.

"Suppose you did," said Standish, "that would not save *you*."

"From what?" roared Aintree. "Think I'm afraid of your night-sticks?"

"From arrest!"

"Arrest *me!*" yelled Aintree. "Do you know who's talking to you? Do you know who I am? I'm Major Aintree, damn you, commanding the infantry. An' I'm here to charge that thug——"

"You are here because you are under arrest," said Standish. "You are arrested for threatening the police, drunkenness, and assaulting a citizen with intent to kill—" The voice of the young man turned shrill and rasping. "And if the man should *die*——"

Aintree burst into a bellow of mocking laughter.

Standish struck the desk with his open palm.

"Silence!" he commanded.

"Silence to *me!*" roared Aintree, "you impertinent pup!" He flung himself forward, shaking his fist. "I'm Major Aintree. I'm your superior officer. I'm an officer an' a gentleman——"

"You are *not!*" replied Standish. "You are a drunken loafer!"

Aintree could not break the silence. Amazement, rage, stupefaction held him in incredulous wonder. Even Meehan moved uneasily. Between the officer commanding the infantry and an officer of police, he feared the lieutenant would not survive.

But he heard the voice of his lieutenant continuing, evenly, coldly, like the voice of a judge delivering sentence.

"You are a drunken loafer," repeated the boy. "And you know it. And I mean that to-morrow morning every one on the Zone shall know it.

And I mean to-morrow night every one in the States shall know it. You've killed a man, or tried to, and I'm going to break you." With his arm he pointed to Meehan. "Break *that* man?" he demanded. "For doing his duty, for trying to stop a murder? Strip *him* of his shield?" The boy laughed savagely. "It's you I am going to strip, Aintree," he cried, "you 'hero of Batangas'; I'm going to strip you naked. I'm going to 'cut the buttons off your coat, and tear the stripes away.' I'm going to degrade you and disgrace you, and drive you out of the army!" He threw his note-book on the table. "There's your dossier, Aintree," he said. "For three months you've been drunk, and there's your record. The police got it for me; it's written there with dates and the names of witnesses. I'll swear to it. I've been after you to get you, and I've got you. With that book, with what you did to-night, *you'll leave the army.* You may resign, you may be court-martialled, you may be hung. I don't give a damn what they do to you, but *you will leave the army!*"

He turned to Meehan, and with a jerk of the hand signified Aintree.

"Put him in a cell," he said. "If he resists——"

Aintree gave no sign of resisting. He stood mo-

tionless, his arms hanging limp, his eyes protruding. The liquor had died in him, and his anger had turned chill. He tried to moisten his lips to speak, but his throat was baked, and no sound issued. He tried to focus his eyes upon the menacing little figure behind the desk, but between the two lamps it swayed, and shrank and swelled. Of one thing only was he sure, that some grave disaster had overtaken him, something that when he came fully to his senses still would overwhelm him, something he could not conquer with his fists. His brain, even befuddled as it was, told him he had been caught by the heels, that he was in a trap, that smashing this boy who threatened him could not set him free. He recognized, and it was this knowledge that stirred him with alarm, that this was no ordinary officer of justice, but a personal enemy, an avenging spirit who, for some unknown reason, had spread a trap; who, for some private purpose of revenge, would drag him down.

Frowning painfully, he waved Meehan from him.

"Wait," he commanded. "I don' unnerstan'. What good's it goin' to do you to lock me up an' disgrace me? What harm have I done you? Who asked *you* to run the army, anyway? Who *are* you?"

"My name is Standish," said the lieutenant. "My father was colonel of the Thirty-third when you first joined it from the Academy."

Aintree exclaimed with surprise and enlightenment. He broke into hurried speech, but Standish cut him short.

"And General Standish of the Mexican War," he continued, "was my grandfather. Since Washington all my people have been officers of the regular army, and I'd been one, too, if I'd been bright enough. That's why I respect the army. That's why I'm going to throw you out of it. You've done harm fifty men as good as you can't undo. You've made drunkards of a whole battalion. You've taught boys who looked up to you, as I looked up to you once, to laugh at discipline, to make swine of themselves. You've set them an example. I'm going to make an example of you. That's all there is to this. I've got no grudge against you. I'm not vindictive; I'm sorry for you. But," he paused and pointed his hand at Aintree as though it held a gun, "*you are going to leave the army!*"

Like a man coming out of an ugly dream, Aintree opened and shut his eyes, shivered, and stretched his great muscles. They watched him with an effort of the will force himself back to

consciousness. When again he spoke, his tone was sane.

"See here, Standish," he began, "I'll not beg of you or any man. I only ask you to think what you're doing. This means my finish. If you force this through to-night it means court-martial, it means I lose my commission, I lose—lose things you know nothing about. And, if I've got a record for drinking, I've got a record for other things, too. Don't forget that!"

Standish shook his head. "*I* didn't forget it," he said.

"Well, suppose *I* did," demanded Aintree. "Suppose I *did* go on the loose, just to pass the time, just because I'm sick of this damned ditch? Is it fair to wipe out all that went before, for that? I'm the youngest major in the army, I served in three campaigns, I'm a medal-of-honor man, I've got a career ahead of me, and—and I'm going to be married. If you give me a chance——"

Standish struck the table with his fist.

"I *will* give you a chance," he cried. "If you'll give your word to this man and to me, that, so help you God, you'll never drink again—I'll let you go."

If what Standish proposed had been something base, Aintree could not have accepted it with more contempt.

"I'll see you in hell first," he said.

As though the interview was at an end, Standish dropped into his chair and leaning forward, from the table picked up a cigar. As he lit it, he motioned Meehan toward his prisoner, but before the policeman could advance the sound of footsteps halted him.

Bullard, his eyes filled with concern, leaped up the steps, and ran to the desk.

"Lieutenant!" he stammered, "that man—the nigger that officer shot—he's dead!"

Aintree gave a gasp that was partly a groan, partly a cry of protest, and Bullard, as though for the first time aware of his presence, sprang back to the open door and placed himself between it and Aintree.

"It's murder!" he said.

None of the three men spoke; and when Meehan crossed to where Aintree stood, staring fearfully at nothing, he had only to touch his sleeve, and Aintree, still staring, fell into step beside him.

From the yard outside Standish heard the iron door of the cell swing shut, heard the key grate in the lock, and the footsteps of Meehan returning.

Meehan laid the key upon the desk, and with Bullard stood at attention, waiting.

"Give him time," whispered Standish. "Let it sink in!"

At the end of half an hour Standish heard Aintree calling, and, with Meehan carrying a lantern, stepped into the yard and stopped at the cell door.

Aintree was quite sober. His face was set and white, his voice was dull with suffering. He stood erect, clasping the bars in his hands.

"Standish," he said, "you gave me a chance a while ago, and I refused it. I was rough about it. I'm sorry. It made me hot because I thought you were forcing my hand, blackmailing me into doing something I ought to do as a free agent. Now, I *am* a free agent. You couldn't give me a chance now, you couldn't let me go now, not if I swore on a thousand Bibles. I don't know what they'll give me—Leavenworth for life, or hanging, or just dismissal. But, *you've* got what *you* wanted—I'm leaving the army!" Between the bars he stretched out his arms and held a hand toward Meehan and Standish. In the same dull, numbed voice he continued.

"So, now," he went on, "that I've nothing to gain by it, I want to swear to you and to this man here, that whether I hang, or go to jail, or am turned loose, I will never, so help me God, take another drink."

Standish was holding the hand of the man who once had been his hero. He clutched it tight.

"Aintree," he cried, "suppose I could work a miracle; suppose I've played a trick on you, to show you your danger, to show you what might come to you any day—does that oath still stand?"

The hand that held his ground the bones together.

"I've given my word!" cried Aintree. "For the love of God, don't torture me. Is the man alive?"

As Standish swung open the cell door, the hero of Batangas, he who could thrash any man on the Isthmus, crumpled up like a child upon his shoulder.

And Meehan, as he ran for water, shouted joyfully.

"That nigger," he called to Bullard, "can go home now. The lieutenant don't want him no more."

EVIL TO HIM WHO EVIL THINKS

EVIL TO HIM WHO EVIL THINKS

AS a rule, the instant the season closed Aline Proctor sailed on the first steamer for London, where awaited her many friends, both English and American—and to Paris, where she selected those gowns that on and off the stage helped to make her famous. But this particular summer she had spent with the Endicotts at Bar Harbor, and it was at their house Herbert Nelson met her. After Herbert met her very few other men enjoyed that privilege. This was her wish as well as his.

They behaved disgracefully. Every morning after breakfast they disappeared and spent the day at opposite ends of a canoe. She, knowing nothing of a canoe, was happy in stabbing the waters with her paddle while he told her how he loved her and at the same time, with anxious eyes on his own paddle, skilfully frustrated her efforts to drown them both. While the affair lasted it was ideal and beautiful, but unfortunately it lasted only two months.

Then Lord Albany, temporarily in America as honorary attaché to the British embassy, his adoring glances, his accent, and the way he brushed his hair, proved too much for the susceptible heart of Aline, and she chucked Herbert and asked herself how a woman of her age could have seriously considered marrying a youth just out of Harvard! At that time she was a woman of nineteen; but, as she had been before the public ever since she was eleven, the women declared she was not a day under twenty-six; and the men knew she could not possibly be over sixteen!

Aline's own idea of herself was that without some one in love with her she could not exist—that, unless she knew some man cared for her and for her alone, she would wither and die. As a matter of fact, whether any one loved her or not did not in the least interest her. There were several dozen men who could testify to that. They knew! What she really wanted was to be head over ears in love—to adore some one, to worship him, to imagine herself starving for him and making sacrifice hits for him; but when the moment came to make the sacrifice hit and marry the man, she invariably found that a greater, truer love had arisen—for some one else.

This greater and truer love always made her

behave abominably to the youth she had just jilted. She wasted no time on post-mortems. She was so eager to show her absolute loyalty to the new monarch that she grudged every thought she ever had given the one she had cast into exile. She resented him bitterly. She could not forgive him for having allowed her to be desperately in love with him. He should have known he was not worthy of such a love as hers. He should have known that the real prince was waiting only just round the corner.

As a rule, the rejected ones behaved well. Each decided Aline was much too wonderful a creature for him, and continued to love her cautiously and from a distance. None of them ever spoke or thought ill of her and would gladly have punched any one who did. It was only the women whose young men Aline had temporarily confiscated, and then returned saddened and chastened, who were spiteful. And they dared say no more than that Aline would probably have known her mind better if she had had a mother to look after her. This, coming to the ears of Aline, caused her to reply that a girl who could not keep straight herself, but needed a mother to help her, would not keep straight had she a dozen mothers. As she put it cheerfully, a girl who goes wrong and then pleads

"no mother to guide her" is like a jockey who pulls a race and then blames the horse.

Each of the young men Aline rejected married some one else and, except when the name of Aline Proctor in the theatrical advertisements or in electric lights on Broadway gave him a start, forgot that for a month her name and his own had been linked together from Portland to San Francisco. But the girl he married did not forget. She never understood what the public saw in Aline Proctor. That Aline was the queen of musical comedy she attributed to the fact that Aline knew the right people and got herself written about in the right way. But that she could sing, dance, act; that she possessed compelling charm; that she "got across" not only to the tired business man, the wine agent, the college boy, but also to the children and the old ladies, was to her never apparent.

Just as Aline could not forgive the rejected suitor for allowing her to love him, so the girl he married never forgave Aline for having loved her husband. Least of all could Sally Winthrop, who two years after the summer at Bar Harbor married Herbert Nelson, forgive her. And she let Herbert know it. Herbert was properly in love with Sally Winthrop, but he liked to think that his engagement to Aline,

though brief and abruptly terminated, had proved him to be a man fatally attractive to all women. And though he was hypnotizing himself into believing that his feeling for Aline had been the grand passion, the truth was that all that kept her in his thoughts was his own vanity. He was not discontented with his lot—his lot being Sally Winthrop, her millions, and her estate of three hundred acres near Westbury. Nor was he still longing for Aline. It was only that his vanity was flattered by the recollection that one of the young women most beloved by the public had once loved him.

"I once was a king in Babylon," he used to misquote to himself, "and she was a Christian slave."

He was as young as that.

Had he been content in secret to assure himself that he once had been a reigning monarch, his vanity would have harmed no one; but, unfortunately, he possessed certain documentary evidence to that fact. And he was sufficiently foolish not to wish to destroy it. The evidence consisted of a dozen photographs he had snapped of Aline during the happy days at Bar Harbor, and on which she had written phrases somewhat exuberant and sentimental.

From these photographs Nelson was loath to part—especially with one that showed Aline seated on a rock that ran into the waters of the harbor, and on which she had written: "As long as this rock lasts!" Each time she was in love Aline believed it would last. That in the past it never had lasted did not discourage her.

What to do with these photographs that so vividly recalled the most tumultuous period of his life Nelson could not decide. If he hid them away and Sally found them, he knew she would make his life miserable. If he died and Sally then found them, when he no longer was able to explain that they meant nothing to him, she would believe he always had loved the other woman, and it would make her miserable. He felt he could not safely keep them in his own house; his vanity did not permit him to burn them, and, accordingly, he decided to unload them on some one else.

The young man to whom he confided his collection was Charles Cochran. Cochran was a charming person from the West. He had studied in the Beaux Arts and on foot had travelled over England and Europe, preparing himself to try his fortune in New York as an architect. He was now in the office of the architects Post & Constant, and lived alone in a tiny farmhouse he had made over for

himself near Herbert Nelson, at Westbury, Long Island.

Post & Constant were a fashionable firm and were responsible for many of the French châteaus and English country houses that were rising near Westbury, Hempstead, and Roslyn; and it was Cochran's duty to drive over that territory in his runabout, keep an eye on the contractors, and dissuade clients from grafting mansard roofs on Italian villas. He had built the summer home of the Herbert Nelsons, and Herbert and Charles were very warm friends. Charles was of the same lack of years as was Herbert, of an enthusiastic and sentimental nature; and, like many other young men, the story of his life also was the lovely and much-desired Aline Proctor. It was this coincidence that had made them friends and that had led Herbert to select Charles as the custodian of his treasure. As a custodian and confidant Charles especially appealed to his new friend because, except upon the stage and in restaurants, Charles had never seen Aline Proctor, did not know her—and considered her so far above him, so unattainable, that he had no wish to seek her out. Unknown, he preferred to worship at a distance. In this determination Herbert strongly encouraged him.

When he turned over the pictures to Charles, Herbert could not resist showing them to him. They were in many ways charming. They presented the queen of musical comedy in several new rôles. In one she was in a sailor suit, giving an imitation of a girl paddling a canoe. In another she was in a riding-habit mounted upon a pony of which she seemed very much afraid. In some she sat like a siren among the rocks with the waves and seaweed snatching at her feet, and in another she crouched beneath the wheel of Herbert's touring car. All of the photographs were unprofessional and intimate, and the legends scrawled across them were even more intimate.

"'As long as this rock lasts!'" read Herbert. At arm's length he held the picture for Cochran to see, and laughed bitterly and unmirthfully as he had heard leading men laugh in problem plays.

"That is what she wrote," he mocked—"but how long did it last? Until she saw that little red-headed Albany playing polo. That lasted until his mother heard of it. She thought her precious lamb was in the clutches of a designing actress, and made the Foreign Office cable him home. Then Aline took up one of those army aviators, and chucked him for that fellow who painted her portrait, and threw him over for the lawn-tennis

champion. Now she's engaged to Chester Griswold, and Heaven pity her! Of course he's the greatest catch in America; but he's a prig and a snob, and he's so generous with his money that he'll give you five pennies for a nickel any time you ask him. He's got a heart like the meter of a taxicab, and he's jealous as a cat. Aline will have a fine time with Chester! I knew him at St. Paul's and at Harvard, and he's got as much red blood in him as an eel!"

Cochran sprang to the defence of the lady of his dreams.

"There must be some good in the man," he protested, "or Miss Proctor——"

"Oh, those solemn snobs," declared Herbert, "impress women by just keeping still. Griswold pretends the reason he doesn't speak to you is because he's too superior, but the real reason is that he knows whenever he opens his mouth he shows he is an ass."

Reluctantly Herbert turned over to Charles the precious pictures. "It would be a sin to destroy them, wouldn't it?" he prompted.

Cochran agreed heartily.

"You might even," suggested Herbert, "leave one or two of them about. You have so many of Aline already that one more wouldn't be noticed.

Then when I drop in I could see it." He smiled ingratiatingly.

"But those I have I bought," Cochran pointed out. "Anybody can buy them, but yours are personal. And they're signed."

"No one will notice that but me," protested Herbert. "Just one or two," he coaxed—"stuck round among the others. They'd give me a heap of melancholy pleasure."

Charles shook his head doubtfully.

"Your wife often comes here with you," he said. "I don't believe they'd give her melancholy pleasure. The question is, are you married to Sally or to Aline Proctor?"

"Oh, of course," exclaimed Herbert—"if you refuse!"

With suspicious haste Charles surrendered.

"I don't refuse," he explained; "I only ask if it's wise. Sally knows you were once very fond of Miss Proctor—knows you were engaged to her."

"But," protested Herbert, "Sally sees your photographs of Aline. What difference can a few more make? After she's seen a dozen she gets used to them."

No sooner had Herbert left him than the custodian of the treasure himself selected the photographs he would display. In them the young

woman he had—from the front row of the orchestra—so ardently admired appeared in a new light. To Cochran they seemed at once to render her more kindly, more approachable; to show her as she really was, the sort of girl any youth would find it extremely difficult not to love. Cochran found it extremely easy. The photographs gave his imagination all the room it wanted. He believed they also gave him an insight into her real character that was denied to anybody else. He had always credited her with all the virtues; he now endowed her with every charm of mind and body. In a week to the two photographs he had selected from the loan collection for purposes of display and to give Herbert melancholy pleasure he had added three more. In two weeks there were half a dozen. In a month, nobly framed in silver, in leather of red, green, and blue, the entire collection smiled upon him from every part of his bedroom. For he now kept them where no one but himself could see them. No longer was he of a mind to share his borrowed treasure with others—not even with the rightful owner.

Chester Griswold, spurred on by Aline Proctor, who wanted to build a summer home on Long Island, was motoring with Post, of Post & Constant, in the neighborhood of Westbury. Post had

pointed out several houses designed by his firm, which he hoped might assist Griswold in making up his mind as to the kind of house he wanted; but none they had seen had satisfied his client.

"What I want is a cheap house," explained the young millionaire. "I don't really want a house at all," he complained. "It's Miss Proctor's idea. When we are married I intend to move into my mother's town house, but Miss Proctor wants one for herself in the country. I've agreed to that; but it must be small and it must be cheap."

"Cheap" was a word that the clients of Post & Constant never used; but Post knew the weaknesses of some of the truly rich, and he knew also that no house ever built cost only what the architect said it would cost.

"I know the very house you want!" he exclaimed. "One of our young men owns it. He made it over from an old farmhouse. It's very well arranged; we've used his ground-plan several times and it works out splendidly. If he's not at home, I'll show you over the place myself. And if you like the house he's the man to build you one."

When they reached Cochran's home he was at Garden City playing golf, but the servant knew Mr. Post, and to him and his client threw open every room in the house.

"Now, this," exclaimed the architect enthusiastically, "is the master's bedroom. In your case it would probably be your wife's room and you would occupy the one adjoining, which Cochran now uses as a guest-room. As you see, they are entirely cut off from——"

Mr. Griswold did not see. Up to that moment he had given every appearance of being both bored and sulky. Now his attention was entirely engaged—but not upon the admirable simplicity of Mr. Cochran's ground-plan, as Mr. Post had hoped. Instead, the eyes of the greatest catch in America were intently regarding a display of photographs that smiled back at him from every corner of the room. Not only did he regard these photographs with a savage glare, but he approached them and carefully studied the inscriptions scrawled across the face of each.

Post himself cast a glance at the nearest photographs, and then hastily manœuvred his client into the hall and closed the door.

"We will now," he exclaimed, "visit the butler's pantry, which opens upon the dining-room and kitchen, thus saving——"

But Griswold did not hear him. Without giving another glance at the house he stamped out of it and, plumping himself down in the motor-car,

banged the door. Not until Post had driven him well into New York did he make any comment.

"What did you say," he then demanded, "is the name of the man who owns that last house we saw?"

Post told him.

"I never heard of him!" said Griswold as though he were delivering young Cochran's death sentence. "Who is he?"

"He's an architect in our office," said Post. "We think a lot of him. He'll leave us soon of course. The best ones always do. His work is very popular. So is he."

"I never heard of him," repeated Griswold. Then, with sudden heat, he added savagely: "But I mean to to-night."

When Griswold had first persuaded Aline Proctor to engage herself to him he had suggested that, to avoid embarrassment, she should tell him the names of the other men to whom she had been engaged.

"What kind of embarrassment would that avoid?"

"If I am talking to a man," said Griswold, "and he knows the woman I'm going to marry was engaged to him and I don't know that, he has me at a disadvantage."

"I don't see that he has," said Aline. "If we suppose, for the sake of argument, that to marry me is desirable, I would say that the man who was going to marry me had the advantage over the one I had declined to marry."

"I want to know who those men are," explained Griswold, "because I want to avoid them. I don't want to talk to them. I don't want even to know them."

"I don't see how I can help you," said Aline. "I haven't the slightest objection to telling you the names of the men I have cared for, if I can remember them, but I certainly do not intend to tell you the name of any man who cared for me enough to ask me to marry him. That's his secret, not mine—certainly not yours."

Griswold thought he was very proud. He really was very vain; and as jealousy is only vanity in its nastiest development he was extremely jealous. So he persisted.

"Will you do this?" he demanded. "If I ever ask you, 'Is that one of the men you cared for?' will you tell me?"

"If you wish it," said Aline; "but I can't see any health in it. It will only make you uncomfortable. So long as you know I have given you the greatest and truest love I am capable

of, why should you concern yourself with my mistakes?"

"So that I can avoid meeting what you call your mistakes," said Griswold—"and being friendly with them."

"I assure you," laughed Aline, "it wouldn't hurt you a bit to be as friendly with them as they'd let you. Maybe they weren't as proud of their families as you are, but they made up for that by being a darned sight prouder of me!"

Later, undismayed by this and unashamed, on two occasions Griswold actually did demand of Aline if a genial youth she had just greeted joyfully was one of those for whom she once had cared.

And Aline had replied promptly and truthfully that he was. But in the case of Charles Cochran, Griswold did not ask Aline if he was one of those for whom she once had cared. He considered the affair with Cochran so serious that, in regard to that man, he adopted a different course.

In digging rivals out of the past his jealousy had made him indefatigable, but in all his researches he never had heard the name of Charles Cochran. That fact and the added circumstance that Aline herself never had mentioned the man was in his

eyes so suspicious as to be almost a damning evidence of deception. And he argued that if in the past Aline had deceived him as to Charles Cochran she would continue to do so. Accordingly, instead of asking her frankly for the truth he proceeded to lay traps for it. And if there is one thing Truth cannot abide, it is being hunted by traps.

That evening Aline and he were invited to a supper in her honor, and as he drove her from the theatre to the home of their hostess he told her of his search earlier in the day.

The electric light in the limousine showed Aline's face as clearly as though it were held in a spotlight, and as he prepared his trap Griswold regarded her jealously.

"Post tells me," he said, "he has the very man you want for your architect. He's sure you'll find him most understanding and—and—sympathetic. He's a young man who is just coming to the front, and he's very popular, especially with women."

"What's his being popular with women," asked Aline, "got to do with his carrying out my ideas of a house?"

"That's just it," said Griswold—"it's the woman who generally has the most to say as to how her house shall be built, and this man under-

stands woman. I have reasons for believing he will certainly understand you!"

"If he understands me well enough to give me all the linen-closets I want," said Aline, "he will be perfectly satisfactory."

Before delivering his blow Griswold sank back into his corner of the car, drew his hat brim over his forehead, and fixed spying eyes upon the very lovely face of the girl he had asked to marry him.

"His name," he said in fateful tones, "is Charles Cochran!"

It was supposed to be a body blow; but, to his distress, Aline neither started nor turned pale. Neither, for trying to trick her, did she turn upon him in reproof and anger. Instead, with alert eyes, she continued to peer out of the window at the electric-light advertisements and her beloved Broadway.

"Well?" demanded Griswold; his tone was hoarse and heavy with meaning.

"Well what?" asked Aline pleasantly.

"How," demanded Griswold, "do you like Charles Cochran for an architect?"

"How should I know?" asked Aline. "I've not met him yet!"

She had said it! And she had said it without the waver of one of her lovely eyelashes. No won-

der the public already hailed her as a finished actress! Griswold felt that his worst fears were justified. She had lied to him. And, as he knew she had never before lied to him, that now she did so proved beyond hope of doubt that the reason for it was vital, imperative, and compelling. But of his suspicions Griswold gavè no sign. He would not at once expose her. He had trapped her, but as yet she must not know that. He would wait until he had still further entangled her—until she could not escape; and then, with complete proof of her deceit, he would confront and overwhelm her.

With this amiable purpose in mind he called early the next morning upon Post & Constant and asked to see Mr. Cochran. He wished, he said, to consult him about the new house. Post had not yet reached the office, and of Griswold's visit with Post to his house Cochran was still ignorant. He received Griswold most courteously. He felt that the man who was loved by the girl he also had long and hopelessly worshipped was deserving of the highest consideration. Griswold was less magnanimous. When he found his rival—for as such he beheld him—was of charming manners and gallant appearance he considered that fact an additional injury; but he concealed his resentment, for he was going to trap Cochran, too.

He found the architect at work leaning over a drawing-board, and as they talked Cochran continued to stand. He was in his shirt-sleeves, which were rolled to his shoulders; and the breadth of those shoulders and the muscles of his sunburned arms were much in evidence. Griswold considered it a vulgar exhibition.

For over ten minutes they talked solely of the proposed house, but not once did Griswold expose the fact that he had seen any more of it than any one might see from the public road. When he rose to take his leave he said:

"How would it do if I motored out Sunday and showed your house to Miss Proctor? Sunday is the only day she has off, and if it would not inconvenience you——"

The tender heart of Cochran leaped in wild tumult; he could not conceal his delight, nor did he attempt to do so; and his expression made it entirely unnecessary for him to assure Griswold that such a visit would be entirely welcome and that they might count on finding him at home. As though it were an afterthought Griswold halted at the door and said:

"I believe you are already acquainted with Miss Proctor."

Cochran, conscious of five years of devotion,

found that he was blushing, and longed to strangle himself. Nor was the blush lost upon Griswold.

"I'm sorry," said Cochran, "but I've not had that honor. On the stage, of course——"

He shrugged the broad shoulders deprecatingly, as though to suggest that not to know Miss Proctor as an artist argued oneself unknown.

Griswold pretended to be puzzled. As though endeavoring to recall a past conversation he frowned.

"But Aline," he said, "told me she had met you —met you at Bar Harbor." In the fatal photographs the familiar landfalls of Bar Harbor had been easily recognized.

The young architect shook his head.

"It must be another Cochran," he suggested. "I have never been in Bar Harbor."

With the evidence of the photographs before him this last statement was a verdict of guilty, and Griswold, not with the idea of giving Cochran a last chance to be honest, but to cause him to dig the pit still deeper, continued to lead him on. "Maybe she meant York Harbor?"

Again Cochran shook his head and laughed.

"Believe me," he said, "if I'd ever met Miss Proctor *anywhere* I wouldn't forget it!"

Ten minutes later Griswold was talking to Aline

over the telephone. He intended to force matters. He would show Aline she could neither trifle with nor deceive Chester Griswold; but the thought that he had been deceived was not what most hurt him. What hurt him was to think that Aline had preferred a man who looked like an advertisement for ready-made clothes and who worked in his shirt-sleeves.

Griswold took it for granted that any woman would be glad to marry him. So many had been willing to do so that he was convinced, when one of them was not, it was not because there was anything wrong with him, but because the girl herself lacked taste and perception.

That the others had been in any degree moved by his many millions had never suggested itself. He was convinced each had loved him for himself alone; and if Aline, after meeting him, would still consider any one else, it was evident something was very wrong with Aline. He was determined that she must be chastened—must be brought to a proper appreciation of her good fortune and of his condescension.

On being called to the telephone at ten in the morning, Aline demanded to know what could excuse Griswold for rousing her in the middle of the night!

Griswold replied that, though the day was young, it also was charming; that on Sunday there might be rain; and that if she desired to see the house he and Post thought would most suit her, he and his car would be delighted to convey her to it. They could make the run in an hour, lunch with friends at Westbury, and return in plenty of time for the theatre. Aline was delighted at the sudden interest Griswold was showing in the new house. Without a moment's hesitation she walked into the trap. She would go, she declared, with pleasure. In an hour he should call for her.

Exactly an hour later Post arrived at his office. He went directly to Cochran.

"Charles," he said, "I'm afraid I got you into trouble yesterday. I took a client to see your house. You have often let us do it before; but since I was there last you've made some changes. In your bedroom—" Post stopped.

Cochran's naïve habit of blushing told him it was not necessary to proceed. In tones of rage and mortification Cochran swore explosively; Post was relieved to find he was swearing at himself.

"I ought to be horsewhipped!" roared Cochran. "I'll never forgive myself! Who," he demanded, "saw the pictures? Was it a man or a woman?"

Post laughed unhappily.

"It was Chester Griswold."

A remarkable change came over Cochran. Instead of sobering him, as Post supposed it would, the information made him even more angry—only now his anger was transferred from himself to Griswold.

"The blankety-blank bounder!" yelled Cochran. "That was what he wanted! That's why he came here!"

"Here!" demanded Post.

"Not an hour ago," cried Cochran. "He asked me about Bar Harbor. He saw those pictures were taken at Bar Harbor!"

"I think," said Post soothingly, "he'd a right to ask questions. There were so many pictures, and they were very—well—very!"

"I'd have answered his questions," roared Cochran, "if he'd asked them like a man, but he came snooping down here to spy on me. He tried to trick me. He insulted me! He insulted her!" He emitted a howl of dismay. "And I told him I'd never been to Bar Harbor—that I'd never met Aline Proctor!"

Cochran seized his coat and hat. He shouted to one of the office boys to telephone the garage for his car.

"What are you—where are you going?" demanded Post.

"I'm going home first," cried Cochran, "to put those pictures in a safe, as I should have done three months ago. And then I'm going to find Chester Griswold and tell him he's an ass and a puppy!"

"If you do that," protested Post, "you're likely to lose us a very valuable client."

"And your client," roared Charles, "is likely to lose some very valuable teeth!"

As Charles whirled into the country road in which stood his house he saw drawn up in front of it the long gray car in which, that morning, Chester Griswold had called at the office. Cochran emitted a howl of anger. Was his home again to be invaded? And again while he was absent? To what extreme would Griswold's jealousy next lead him? He fell out of his own car while it still moved, and leaped up the garden walk. The front rooms of the house were empty, but from his bedroom he heard, raised in excited tones, the voice of Griswold. The audacity of the man was so surprising, and his own delight at catching him red-handed so satisfying, that no longer was Cochran angry. The Lord had delivered his enemy into his hands! And, as he advanced toward his bed-

room, not only was he calm, but, at the thought of his revenge, distinctly jubilant. In the passageway a frightened maid servant, who, at his unexpected arrival, was now even more frightened, endeavored to give him an explanation; but he waved her into silence, and, striding before her, entered his bedroom.

He found confronting him a tall and beautiful young woman. It was not the Aline Proctor he knew. It was not the well-poised, gracious, and distinguished beauty he had seen gliding among the tables at Sherry's or throwing smiles over the footlights. This Aline Proctor was a very indignant young person, with flashing eyes, tossing head, and a stamping foot. Extended from her at arm's length, she held a photograph of herself in a heavy silver frame; and, as though it were a weapon, she was brandishing it in the face of Chester Griswold. As Cochran, in amazement, halted in the doorway she was exclaiming:

"I told you I didn't know Charles Cochran! I tell you so now! If you can't believe me——"

Out of the corner of her flashing eyes the angry lady caught sight of Cochran in the doorway. She turned upon the intruder as though she meant forcibly to eject him.

"Who are you?" she demanded. Her manner

and tone seemed to add: "And what the deuce are you doing here?"

Charles answered her tone.

"I am Charles Cochran," he said. "I live here. This is my house!"

These words had no other effect upon Miss Proctor than to switch her indignation down another track. She now turned upon Charles.

"Then, if this is your house," cried that angry young person, "why have you filled it with photographs of me that belong to some one else?"

Charles saw that his hour had come. His sin had found him out. He felt that to prevaricate would be only stupid.

Griswold had tried devious methods—and look where his devious methods had dumped him! Griswold certainly was in wrong. Charles quickly determined to adopt a course directly opposite. Griswold had shown an utter lack of confidence in Aline. Charles decided that he would give her his entire confidence, would throw himself upon the mercy of the court.

"I have those photographs in my house, Miss Proctor," he said, "because I have admired you a long time. They were more like you than those I could buy. Having them here has helped me a

lot, and it hasn't done you any harm. You know very well you have anonymous admirers all over this country. I'm only one of them. If I have offended, I have offended with many, many thousands."

Already it has been related that Cochran was very good to look upon. At the present moment, as he spoke in respectful, even soulful accents, meekly and penitently proclaiming his long-concealed admiration, Miss Proctor found her indignation melting like an icicle in the sun.

Still, she did not hold herself cheaply. She was accustomed to such open flattery. She would not at once capitulate.

"But these pictures," she protested, "I gave to a man I knew. You have no right to them. They are not at all the sort of picture I would give to an utter stranger!" With anxiety the lovely lady paused for a reply. She hoped that the reply the tall young man with appealing eyes would make would be such as to make it possible for her to forgive him.

He was not given time to reply. With a mocking snort Griswold interrupted. Aline and Charles had entirely forgotten him.

"An utter stranger!" mimicked Griswold. "Oh, yes; he's an utter stranger! You're pretty good

actors, both of you; but you can't keep that up long, and you'd better stop it now."

"Stop what?" asked Miss Proctor. Her tone was cold and calm, but in her eyes was a strange light. It should have warned Griswold that he would have been safer under the bed.

"Stop pretending!" cried Griswold. "I won't have it!"

"I don't understand," said Miss Proctor. She spoke in the same cold voice, only now it had dropped several degrees nearer freezing. "I don't think you understand yourself. You won't have what?"

Griswold now was frightened, and that made him reckless. Instead of withdrawing he plunged deeper.

"I won't have you two pretending you don't know each other," he blustered. "I won't stand being fooled! If you're going to deceive me before we're married, what will you do after we're married?"

Charles emitted a howl. It was made up of disgust, amazement, and rage. Fiercely he turned upon Miss Proctor.

"Let me have him!" he begged.

"No!" almost shouted Miss Proctor. Her tone was no longer cold—it was volcanic. Her eyes,

flashing beautifully, were fixed upon Griswold. She made a gesture as though to sweep Charles out of the room. "Please go!" she demanded. "This does not concern you."

Her tone was one not lightly to be disregarded. Charles disregarded it.

"It does concern me," he said briskly. "Nobody can insult a woman in my house—you, least of all!" He turned upon the greatest catch in America. "Griswold," he said, "I never met this lady until I came into this room; but I know her, understand her, value her better than you'd understand her if you knew her a thousand years!"

Griswold allowed him to go no farther.

"I know this much," he roared: "she was in love with the man who took those photographs, and that man was in love with her! And you're that man!"

"What if I am!" roared back Charles. "Men always have loved her; men always will—because she's a fine, big, wonderful woman! You can't see that, and you never will. You insulted her! Now I'll give you time to apologize for that, and then I'll order you out of this house! And if Miss Proctor is the sort of girl I think she is, she'll order you out of it, too!"

Both men swung toward Miss Proctor. Her

eyes were now smiling excitedly. She first turned them upon Charles, blushing most becomingly.

"Miss Proctor," she said, "hopes she is the sort of girl Mr. Cochran thinks she is." She then turned upon the greatest catch in America. "You needn't wait, Chester," she said, "not even to apologize."

Chester Griswold, alone in his car, was driven back to New York. On the way he invented a story to explain why, at the eleventh hour, he had jilted Aline Proctor; but when his thoughts reverted to the young man he had seen working with his sleeves rolled up he decided it would be safer to let Miss Proctor tell of the broken engagement in her own way.

Charles would not consent to drive his fair guest back to New York until she had first honored him with her presence at luncheon. It was served for two, on his veranda, under the climbing honeysuckles. During the luncheon he told her all.

Miss Proctor, in the light of his five years of devotion, magnanimously forgave him.

"Such a pretty house!" she exclaimed as they drove away from it. "When Griswold selected it for our honeymoon he showed his first appreciation of what I really like."

"It is still at your service!" said Charles.

Miss Proctor's eyes smiled with a strange light, but she did not speak. It was a happy ride; but when Charles left her at the door of her apartment-house he regarded sadly and with regret the bundle of retrieved photographs that she carried away.

"What is it?" she asked kindly.

"I'm thinking of going back to those empty frames?" said Charles, and blushed deeply. Miss Proctor blushed also. With delighted and guilty eyes she hastily scanned the photographs. Snatching one from the collection, she gave it to him and then ran up the steps.

In the light of the spring sunset the eyes of Charles devoured the photograph of which, at last, he was the rightful owner. On it was written: "As long as this rock lasts!"

As Charles walked to his car his expression was distinctly thoughtful.

THE MEN OF ZANZIBAR

THE MEN OF ZANZIBAR

WHEN his hunting trip in Uganda was over, Hemingway shipped his specimens and weapons direct from Mombasa to New York, but he himself journeyed south over the few miles that stretched to Zanzibar.

On the outward trip the steamer had touched there, and the little he saw of the place had so charmed him that all the time he was on safari he promised himself he would not return home without revisiting it. On the morning he arrived he had called upon Harris, his consul, to inquire about the hotel; and that evening Harris had returned his call and introduced him at the club.

One of the men there asked Hemingway what brought him to Africa, and when he answered simply and truthfully that he had come to shoot big game, it was as though he had said something clever, and every one smiled. On the way back to the hotel, as they felt their way through the narrow slits in the wall that served as streets, he asked the consul why every one had smiled.

The consul laughed evasively.

"It's a local joke," he explained. "A lot of men come here for reasons best kept to themselves, and they all say what you said, that they've come to shoot big game. It's grown to be a polite way of telling a man it is none of his business."

"But I didn't mean it that way," protested Hemingway. "I really have been after big game for the last eight months."

In the tone one uses to quiet a drunken man or a child, the consul answered soothingly.

"Of course," he assented—"of course you have." But to show he was not hopelessly credulous, and to keep Hemingway from involving himself deeper he hinted tactfully: "Maybe they noticed you came ashore with only one steamer trunk and no gun-cases."

"Oh, that's easily explained," laughed Hemingway. "My heavy luggage——"

The consul had reached his house and his "boy" was pounding upon it with his heavy staff.

"Please don't explain to me," he begged. "It's quite unnecessary. Down here we're so darned glad to see any white man that we don't ask anything of him except that he won't hurry away. We judge them as they behave themselves here; we don't care what they are at home or why they left it."

Hemingway was highly amused. To find that he, a respectable, sport-loving Hemingway of Massachusetts, should be mistaken for a gun-runner, slave-dealer, or escaping cashier greatly delighted him.

"All right!" he exclaimed. "I'll promise not to bore you with my past, and I agree to be judged by Zanzibar standards. I only hope I can live up to them, for I see I am going to like the place very much."

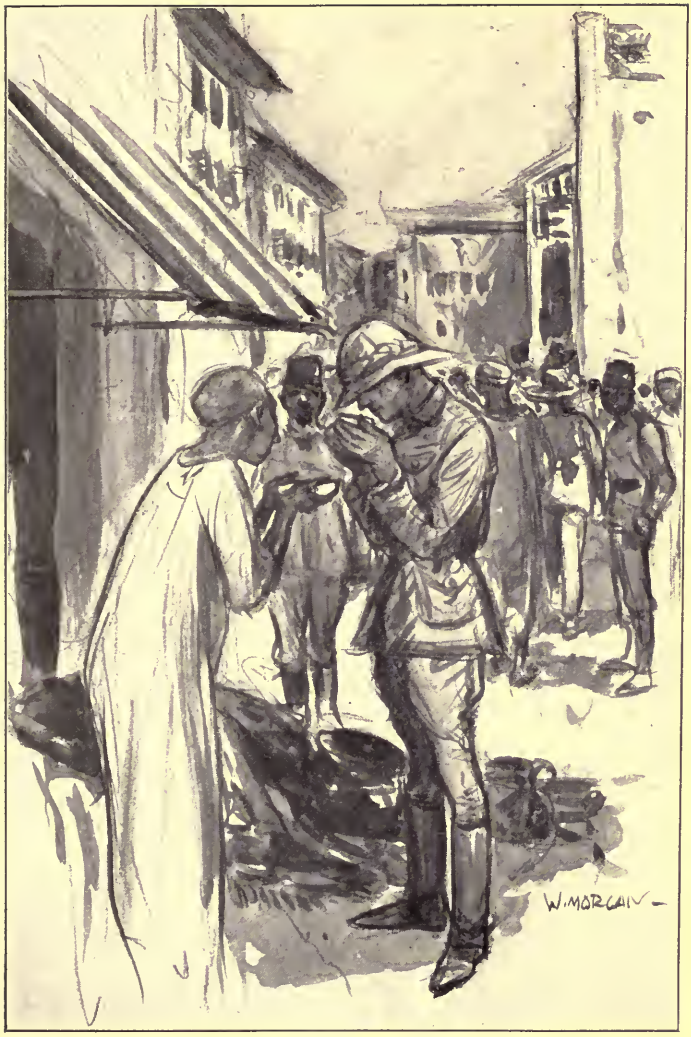
Hemingway kept his promise. He bored no one with confidences as to his ancestors. Of his past he made a point never to speak. He preferred that the little community into which he had dropped should remain unenlightened, should take him as they found him. Of the fact that a college was named after his grandfather and that on his father's railroad he could travel through many States, he was discreetly silent.

The men of Zanzibar asked no questions. That Hemingway could play a stiff game of tennis, a stiffer game of poker, and, on the piano, songs from home was to them sufficient recommendation. In a week he had become one of the most popular members of Zanzibar society. It was as though he had lived there always. Hemingway found himself reaching out to grasp the warmth of the place

as a flower turns to the sun. He discovered that for thirty years something in him had been cheated. For thirty years he had believed that completely to satisfy his soul all he needed was the gray stone walls and the gray-shingled cabins under the gray skies of New England, that what in nature he most loved was the pine forests and the fields of goldenrod on the rock-bound coast of the North Shore. But now, like a man escaped from prison, he leaped and danced in the glaring sunlight of the equator, he revelled in the reckless generosity of nature, in the glorious confusion of colors, in the "blooming blue" of the Indian Ocean, in the Arabian nights spent upon the housetops under the purple sky, and beneath silver stars so near that he could touch them with his hand.

He found it like being perpetually in a comic opera and playing a part in one. For only the scenic artist would dare to paint houses in such yellow, pink, and cobalt-blue; only a "producer" who had never ventured farther from Broadway than the Atlantic City boardwalk would have conceived costumes so mad and so magnificent. Instinctively he cast the people of Zanzibar in the conventional rôles of musical comedy.

His choruses were already in waiting. There



He found it like being perpetually in a comic opera

was the Sultan's body-guard in gold-laced turbans, the merchants of the bazaars in red fezzes and gowns of flowing silk, the Malay sailors in blue, the black native police in scarlet, the ladies of the harems closely veiled and cloaked, the market women in a single garment of orange, or scarlet, or purple, or of all three, and the happy, hilarious Zanzibari boys in the color God gave them.

For hours he would sit under the yellow-and-green awning of the Greek hotel and watch the procession pass, or he would lie under an umbrella on the beach and laugh as the boatmen lifted their passengers to their shoulders and with them splash through the breakers, or in the bazaars for hours he would bargain with the Indian merchants, or in the great mahogany hall of the Ivory House, to the whisper of a punka and the tinkle of ice in a tall glass, listen to tales of Arab raids, of elephant poachers, of the trade in white and black ivory, of the great explorers who had sat in that same room—of Emin Pasha, of Livingstone, of Stanley. His comic opera lacked only a heroine and the love interest.

When he met Mrs. Adair he found both. Polly Adair, as every one who dared to do so preferred to call her, was, like himself, an American and, though absurdly young, a widow. In the States

she would have been called an extremely pretty girl. In a community where the few dozen white women had wilted and faded in the fierce sun of the equator, and where the rest of the women were jet black except their teeth, which were dyed an alluring purple, Polly Adair was as beautiful as a June morning. At least, so Hemingway thought the first time he saw her, and each succeeding time he thought her more beautiful, more lovely, more to be loved.

He met her, three days after his arrival, at the residence of the British agent and consul-general, where Lady Firth was giving tea to the six nurses from the English hospital and to all the other respectable members of Zanzibar society.

"My husband's typist," said her ladyship as she helped Hemingway to tea, "is a copatriot of yours. She's such a nice gell; not a bit like an American. I don't know what I'd do in this awful place without her. Promise me," she begged tragically, "you will not ask her to marry you?"

Unconscious of his fate, Hemingway promised.

"Because all the men do," sighed Lady Firth, "and I never know what morning one of the wretches won't carry her off to a home of her own. And then what would become of me? Men are so selfish! If you must fall in love," suggested her

ladyship, "promise me you will fall in love with"—she paused innocently and raised baby-blue eyes, in a babylike stare—"with some one else."

Again Hemingway promised. He bowed gallantly. "That will be quite easy," he said.

Her ladyship smiled, but Hemingway did not see the smile. He was looking past her at a girl from home, who came across the terrace carrying in her hand a stenographer's note-book.

Lady Firth followed the direction of his eyes and saw the look in them. She exclaimed with dismay:

"Already! Already he deserts me, even before the ink is dry on the paper."

She drew the note-book from Mrs. Adair's fingers and dropped it under the tea-table.

"Letters must wait, my child," she declared.

"But Sir George—" protested the girl.

"Sir George must wait, too," continued his wife; "the Foreign Office must wait, the British Empire must wait until you have had your tea."

The girl laughed helplessly. As though assured her fellow countryman would comprehend, she turned to him.

"They're so exactly like what you want them to be," she said—"I mean about their tea!"

Hemingway smiled back with such intimate un-

derstanding that Lady Firth glanced up inquiringly.

"Have you met Mrs. Adair already?" she asked.

"No," said Hemingway, "but I have been trying to meet her for thirty years."

Perplexed, the Englishwoman frowned, and then, with delight at her own perspicuity, laughed aloud.

"I know," she cried, "in your country you are what they call a 'hustler'! Is that right?" She waved them away. "Take Mrs. Adair over there," she commanded, "and tell her all the news from home. Tell her about the railroad accidents and 'washouts' and the latest thing in lynching."

The young people stretched out in long wicker chairs in the shade of a tree covered with purple flowers. On a perch at one side of them an orang-outang in a steel belt was combing the whiskers of her infant daughter; at their feet what looked like two chow puppies, but which happened to be Lady Firth's pet lions, were chewing each other's toothless gums; and in the immediate foreground the hospital nurses were defying the sun at tennis while the Sultan's band played selections from a Gaiety success of many years in the past. With these surroundings it was difficult to talk of home. Nor on any later occasions, except through inadvertence, did they talk of home.

For the reasons already stated, it amused Hemingway to volunteer no confidences. On account of what that same evening Harris told him of Mrs. Adair, he asked none.

Harris himself was a young man in no way inclined to withhold confidences. He enjoyed giving out information. He enjoyed talking about himself, his duties, the other consuls, the Zanzibaris, and his native State of Iowa. So long as he was permitted to talk, the listener could select the subject. But, combined with his loquacity, Hemingway had found him kind-hearted, intelligent, observing, and the call of a common country had got them quickly together.

Hemingway was quite conscious that the girl he had seen but once had impressed him out of all proportion to what he knew of her. She seemed too good to be true. And he tried to persuade himself that after eight months in the hinterland among hippos and zebras any reasonably attractive girl would have proved equally disturbing.

But he was not convinced. He did not wish to be convinced. He assured himself that had he met Mrs. Adair at home among hundreds of others he would have recognized her as a woman of exceptional character, as one especially charming. He wanted to justify this idea of her; he wanted

to talk of Mrs. Adair to Harris, not to learn more concerning her, but just for the pleasure of speaking her name.

He was much upset at that, and the discovery that on meeting a woman for the first time he still could be so boyishly and ingenuously moved greatly pleased him. It was a most delightful secret. So he acted on the principle that when a man immensely admires a woman and wishes to conceal that fact from every one else he can best do so by declaring his admiration in the frankest and most open manner. After the tea-party, as Harris and himself sat in the consulate, he so expressed himself.

"What an extraordinary nice girl," he exclaimed, "is that Mrs. Adair! I had a long talk with her. She is most charming. However did a woman like that come to be in a place like this?"

Judging from his manner, it seemed to Hemingway that at the mention of Mrs. Adair's name he had found Harris mentally on guard, as though the consul had guessed the question would come and had prepared for it.

"She just dropped in here one day," said Harris, "from no place in particular. Personally, I always have thought from heaven."

"It's a good address," said Hemingway.

"It seems to suit her," the consul agreed. "Anyway, if she doesn't come from there, that's where she's going—just on account of the good she's done us while she's been here. She arrived four months ago with a typewriting-machine and letters to me from our consuls in Cape Town and Durban. She had done some typewriting for them. It seems that after her husband died, which was a few months after they were married, she learned to make her living by typewriting. She worked too hard and broke down, and the doctor said she must go to hot countries, the 'hotter the better.' So she's worked her way half around the world typewriting. She worked chiefly for her own consuls or for the American commission houses. Sometimes she stayed a month, sometimes only over one steamer day. But when she got here Lady Firth took such a fancy to her that she made Sir George engage her as his private secretary, and she's been here ever since."

In a community so small as was that of Zanzibar the white residents saw one another every day, and within a week Hemingway had met Mrs. Adair many times. He met her at dinner, at the British agency; he met her in the country club, where the white exiles gathered for tea and tennis. He hired a launch and in her honor gave a picnic on the

north coast of the island, and on three glorious and memorable nights, after different dinner-parties had ascended to the roof, he sat at her side and across the white level of the housetops looked down into the moonlit harbor.

Whatever interest the two young people felt in each other was in no way discouraged by their surroundings. In the tropics the tender emotions are not winter killed. Had they met at home, the conventions, his own work, her social duties would have kept the progress of their interest within a certain speed limit. But they were in a place free of conventions, and the preceding eight months which Hemingway had spent in the jungle and on the plain had made the society of his fellow man, and of Mrs. Adair in particular, especially attractive.

Hemingway had no work to occupy his time, and he placed it unreservedly at the disposition of his countrywoman. In doing so it could not be said that Mrs. Adair encouraged him. Hemingway himself would have been the first to acknowledge this. From the day he met her he was conscious that always there was an intangible barrier between them. Even before she possibly could have guessed that his interest in her was more than even she, attractive as she was, had the right to expect,

she had wrapped around herself an invisible mantle of defence.

There were certain speeches of his which she never heard, certain tones to which she never responded. At moments when he was complimenting himself that at last she was content to be in his company, she would suddenly rise and join the others, and he would be left wondering in what way he could possibly have offended.

He assured himself that a woman, young and attractive, in a strange land in her dependent position must of necessity be discreet, but in his conduct there certainly had been nothing that was not considerate, courteous, and straightforward.

When he appreciated that he cared for her seriously, that he was gloriously happy in caring, and proud of the way in which he cared, the fact that she persistently held him at arm's length puzzled and hurt. At first when he had deliberately set to work to make her like him he was glad to think that owing to his reticence about himself, if she did like him it would be for himself alone and not for his worldly goods. But when he knew her better he understood that if once Mrs. Adair made up her mind to take a second husband, the fact that he was a social and financial somebody, and not, as

many in Zanzibar supposed Hemingway to be, a social outcast, would make but little difference.

Nor was her manner to be explained by the fact that the majority of women found him unattractive. As to that, the pleasant burden of his experience was to the contrary. He at last wondered if there was some one else, if he had come into her life too late. He set about looking for the man, and so he believed he soon found him.

Of the little colony, Arthur Fearing was the man of whom Hemingway had seen the least. That was so because Fearing wished it. Like himself, Fearing was an American, young, and a bachelor, but, very much unlike Hemingway, a hermit and a recluse.

Two years before he had come to Zanzibar looking for an investment for his money. In Zanzibar there were gentlemen adventurers of every country, who were welcome to live in any country save their own.

To them Mr. Fearing seemed a Heaven-sent victim. But to him their alluring tales of the fortunes that were to rise from buried treasures, lost mines, and pearl beds did not appeal. Instead he conferred with the consuls, the responsible merchants, the partners in the prosperous trading houses. After a month of "looking around"

he had purchased outright the good-will and stock of one of the oldest of the commission houses, and soon showed himself to be a most capable man of business. But, except as a man of business, no one knew him. From the dim recesses of his warehouse he passed each day to the seclusion of his bungalow in the country. And, although every one was friendly to him, he made no friends.

It was only after the arrival of Mrs. Adair that he consented to show himself, and it was soon noted that it was only when she was invited that he would appear, and that on these occasions he devoted himself entirely to her. In the presence of others, he still was shy, gravely polite, and speaking but little, and never of himself; but with Mrs. Adair his shyness seemed to leave him, and when with her he was seen to talk easily and eagerly. And, on her part, to what he said, Polly Adair listened with serious interest.

Lady Firth, who, at home, was a trained and successful match-maker, and who, in Zanzibar, had found but a limited field for her activities, decided that if her companion and protégée must marry, she should marry Fearing.

Fearing was no gentleman adventurer, remittance-man, or humble clerk serving his apprenticeship to a steamship line or an ivory house. He

was one of the pillars of Zanzibar society. The trading house he had purchased had had its beginnings in the slave-trade, and now under his alert direction was making a turnover equal to that of any of its ancient rivals. Personally, Fearing was a most desirable catch. He was well mannered, well read, of good appearance, steady and, in a latitude only six degrees removed from the equator, of impeccable morals.

It is said that it is the person who is in love who always is the first to discover his successful rival. It is either an instinct or because his concern is deeper than that of others.

And so, when Hemingway sought for the influence that separated him from Polly Adair, the trail led to Fearing. To find that the obstacle in the path of his true love was a man greatly relieved him. He had feared that what was in the thoughts of Mrs. Adair was the memory of her dead husband. He had no desire to cross swords with a ghost. But to a living rival he could afford to be generous.

For he was sure no one could care for Polly Adair as he cared, and, like every other man in love, he believed that he alone had discovered in her beauties of soul and character that to the rest of mankind were hidden. This knowledge, he as-

sured himself, had aroused in him a depth of devotion no one else could hope to imitate, and this depth of devotion would in time so impress her, would become so necessary to her existence, that it would force her at last into the arms of the only man who could offer it.

Having satisfied himself in this fashion, he continued cheerfully on his way, and the presence of a rival in no way discouraged him. It only was Polly Adair who discouraged him. And this, in spite of the fact that every hour of the day he tried to bring himself pleasantly to her notice. All that an idle young man in love, aided and abetted by imagination and an unlimited letter of credit, could do, Hemingway did. But to no end.

The treasures he dug out of the bazaars and presented to her, under false pretences as trinkets he happened at that moment to find in his pockets, were admired by her at their own great value, and returned also under false pretences, as having been offered her only to examine.

"It is for your sister at home, I suppose," she prompted. "It's quite lovely. Thank you for letting me see it."

After having been several times severely snubbed in this fashion, Hemingway remarked grimly as he put a black pearl back into his pocket:

"At this rate sister will be mighty glad to see me when I get home. It seems almost a pity I haven't got a sister."

The girl answered this only with a grave smile.

On another occasion she admired a polo pony that had been imported for the stable of the boy sultan. But next morning Hemingway, after much diplomacy, became the owner of it and proudly rode it to the agency. Lady Firth and Polly Adair walked out to meet him arm in arm, but at sight of the pony there came into the eyes of the secretary a look that caused Hemingway to wish himself and his mount many miles in the jungle. He saw that before it had been proffered, his gift-horse had been rejected. He acted promptly.

"Lady Firth," he said, "you've been so awfully kind to me, made this place so like a home to me, that I want you to put this mare in your stable. The Sultan wanted her, but when he learned I meant to turn her over to you, he let her go. We both hope you'll accept."

Lady Firth had no scruples. In five minutes she had accepted, had clapped a side-saddle on her rich gift, and was cantering joyously down the Pearl Road.

Polly Adair looked after her with an expres-

sion that was distinctly wistful. Thus encouraged, Hemingway said:

"I'm glad you are sorry. I hope every time you see that pony you'll be sorry."

"Why should I be sorry?" asked the girl.

"Because you have been unkind," said Hemingway, "and it is not your character to be unkind. And that you have shown lack of character ought to make you sorry."

"But you know perfectly well," said Mrs. Adair, "that if I were to take any one of these wonderful things you bring me, I wouldn't have any character left."

She smiled at him reassuringly. "And you know," she added, "that that is not why I do not take them. It isn't because I can't afford to, or because I don't want them, because I do; but it's because I don't deserve them, because I can give you nothing in return."

"As the copy-book says," returned Hemingway, "'the pleasure is in the giving.' If the copy-book don't say that, I do. And to pretend that you give me nothing, that is ridiculous!"

It was so ridiculous that he rushed on vehemently. "Why, every minute you give me something," he exclaimed. "Just to see you, just to know you are alive, just to be certain when I turn

in at night that when the world wakes up again you will still be a part of it; that is what you give me. And its name is—Happiness!"

He had begun quite innocently; he had had no idea that it would come. But he had said it. As clearly as though he had dropped upon one knee, laid his hand over his heart and exclaimed: "Most beautiful of your sex, I love you! Will you marry me?" His eyes and the tone of his voice had said it. And he knew that he had said it, and that she knew.

Her eyes were filled with sudden tears, and so wonderful was the light in them that for one mad moment Hemingway thought they were tears of happiness. But the light died, and what had been tears became only wet drops of water, and he saw to his dismay that she was most miserable.

The girl moved ahead of him to the cliff on which the agency stood, and which overhung the harbor and the Indian Ocean. Her eyes were filled with trouble. As she raised them to his they begged of him to be kind.

"I am glad you told me," she said. "I have been afraid it was coming. But until you told me I could not say anything. I tried to stop you. I was rude and unkind——"

"You certainly were," Hemingway agreed cheerfully. "And the more you would have nothing to do with me, the more I admired you. And then I learned to admire you more, and then to love you. It seems now as though I had always known and always loved you. And now this is what we are going to do."

He wouldn't let her speak; he rushed on precipitately.

"We are first going up to the house to get your typewriting-machine, and we will bring it back here and hurl it as far as we can off this cliff. I want to see the splash! I want to hear it smash when it hits that rock. It has been my worst enemy, because it helped you to be independent of me, because it kept you from me. Time after time, on the veranda, when I was pretending to listen to Lady Firth, I was listening to that damned machine banging and complaining and tiring your pretty fingers and your dear eyes. So first it has got to go. You have been its slave, now I am going to be your slave. You have only to rub the lamp and things will happen. And because I've told you nothing about myself, you mustn't think that the money that helps to make them happen is 'tainted.' It isn't. Nor am I, nor my father, nor my father's father. I am ask-

ing you to marry a perfectly respectable young man. And, when you *do*——"

Again he gave her no opportunity to interrupt, but rushed on impetuously: "We will sail away across that ocean to wherever you will take me. To Ceylon and Tokio and San Francisco, to Naples and New York, to Greece and Athens. They are all near. They are all yours. Will you accept them and me?" He smiled appealingly, but most miserably. For though he had spoken lightly and with confidence, it was to conceal the fact that he was not at all confident. As he had read in her eyes her refusal of his pony, he had read, even as he spoke, her refusal of himself. When he ceased speaking the girl answered:

"If I say that what you tell me makes me proud, I am saying too little." She shook her head firmly, with an air of finality that frightened Hemingway. "But what you ask—what you suggest is impossible."

"You don't like me?" said Hemingway.

"I like you very much," returned the girl, "and, if I don't seem unhappy that it can't be, it is because I always have known it can't be——"

"*Why* can't it be?" rebelled Hemingway. "I don't mean that I can't understand your not want-

ing to marry me, but if I knew your objection, maybe, I could beat it down."

Again, with the same air of finality, the girl moved her head slowly, as though considering each word; she began cautiously.

"I cannot tell you the reason," she said, "because it does not concern only myself."

"If you mean you care for some one else," pleaded Hemingway, "that does not frighten me at all." It did frighten him extremely, but, believing that a faint heart never won anything, he pretended to be brave.

"For you," he boasted, "I would go down into the grave as deep as any man. He that hath more let him give. I know what I offer. I know I love you as no other man——"

The girl backed away from him as though he had struck her. "You must not say that," she commanded.

For the first time he saw that she was moved, that the fingers she laced and unlaced were trembling. "It is final!" exclaimed the girl. "I cannot marry—you, or any one. I—I have promised. I am not free."

"Nothing in the world is final," returned Hemingway sharply, "except death." He raised his hat and, as though to leave her, moved away.

Not because he admitted defeat, but because he felt that for the present to continue might lose him the chance to fight again. But, to deliver an ultimatum, he turned back.

"As long as you are alive, and I am alive," he told her, "all things are possible. I don't give up hope. I don't give up *you*."

The girl exclaimed with a gesture of despair. "He won't understand!" she cried.

Hemingway advanced eagerly.

"Help me to understand," he begged.

"You won't understand," explained the girl, "that I am speaking the truth. You are right that things can change in the future, but nothing can change the past. Can't you understand that?"

"What do I care for the past?" cried the young man scornfully. "I know you as well as though I had known you for a thousand years and I love you."

The girl flushed crimson.

"Not *my* past," she gasped. "I meant——"

"I don't care what you meant," said Hemingway. "I'm not prying into your little secrets. I know only one thing—two things, that I love you and that, until you love me, I am going to make your life hell!"

"I know only one thing—two things, that I love you and that, until you love me, I am going to make your life hell!"

He caught at her hands, and for an instant she let him clasp them in both of his, while she looked at him.

Something in her face, other than distress and pity, caused his heart to leap. But he was too wise to speak, and, that she might not read the hope in his eyes, turned quickly and left her. He had not crossed the grounds of the agency before he had made up his mind as to the reason for her repelling him.

"She is engaged to Fearing!" he told himself. "She has promised to marry Fearing! She thinks that it is too late to consider another man!" The prospect of a fight for the woman he loved thrilled him greatly. His lower jaw set pugnaciously.

"I'll show her it's not too late," he promised himself. "I'll show her which of us is the man to make her happy. And, if I am not the man, I'll take the first outbound steamer and trouble them no more. But before that happens," he also promised himself, "Fearing must show he is the better man."

In spite of his brave words, in spite of his determination, within the day Hemingway had withdrawn in favor of his rival, and, on the *Crown Prince Eitel*, bound for Genoa and New York, had booked his passage home.

On the afternoon of the same day he had spoken to Polly Adair, Hemingway at the sunset hour betook himself to the consulate. At that hour it had become his custom to visit his fellow countryman and with him share the gossip of the day and such a cocktail as only a fellow countryman could compose. Later he was to dine at the house of the Ivory Company and, as his heart never ceased telling him, Mrs. Adair also was to be present.

"It will be a very pleasant party," said Harris. "They gave me a bid, too, but it's steamer day to-morrow, and I've got to get my mail ready for the *Crown Prince Eitel*. Mrs. Adair is to be there."

Hemingway nodded, and with pleasant anticipation waited. Of Mrs. Adair, Harris always spoke with reverent enthusiasm, and the man who loved her delighted to listen. But this time Harris disappointed him.

"And Fearing, too," he added.

Again Hemingway nodded. The conjunction of the two names surprised him, but he made no sign. Loquacious as he knew Harris to be, he never before had heard his friend even suggest the subject that to Zanzibar had become of acute interest.

Harris filled the two glasses, and began to pace the room. When he spoke it was in the aggrieved

tone of one who feels himself placed in a false position.

"There's no one," he complained suddenly, "so popularly unpopular as the man who butts in. I know that, but still I've always taken his side. I've always been for *him.*" He halted, straddling with legs apart and hands deep in his trousers pockets, and frowned down upon his guest.

"Suppose," he began aggressively, "I see a man driving his car over a cliff. If I tell him that road will take him over a cliff, the *worst* that can happen to me is to be told to mind my own business, and I can always answer back: 'I was only trying to help you.' If I *don't* speak, the man breaks his neck. Between the two, it seems to me, sooner than have any one's life on my hands, I'd rather be told to mind my own business."

Hemingway stared into his glass. His expression was distinctly disapproving, but, undismayed, the consul continued.

"Now, we all know that this morning you gave that polo pony to Lady Firth, and one of us guesses that you first offered it to some one else, who refused it. One of us thinks that very soon, to-morrow, or even to-night, at this party you may offer that same person something else, something worth more than a polo pony, and that if she re-

fuses *that*, it is going to break you all up, is going to hurt you for the rest of your life."

Lifting his eyes from his glass, Hemingway shot at his friend a glance of warning. In haste, Harris continued:

"I know," he protested, answering the look, "I know that this is where Mr. Buttinsky is told to mind his business. But I'm going right on. I'm going to state a hypothetical case with no names mentioned and no questions asked, *or* answered. I'm going to state a theory, and let you draw your own deductions."

He slid into a chair, and across the table fastened his eyes on those of his friend. Confidently and undisturbed, but with a wry smile of dislike, Hemingway stared fixedly back at him.

"What," demanded Harris, "is the first rule in detective work?"

Hemingway started. He was prepared for something unpleasant, but not for that particular form of unpleasantness. But his faith was unshaken, and he smiled confidently. He let the consul answer his own question.

"It is to follow the woman," declared Harris. "And, accordingly, what should be the first precaution of a man making his get-away? To see that the woman does *not* follow. But suppose we

are dealing with a fugitive of especial intelligence, with a criminal who has imagination and brains? He might fix it so that the woman could follow him without giving him away, he might plan it so that no one would suspect. She might arrive at his hiding-place only after many months, only after each had made separately a long circuit of the globe, only after a journey with a plausible and legitimate object. She would arrive disguised in every way, and they would meet as total strangers. And, as strangers under the eyes of others, they would become acquainted, would gradually grow more friendly, would be seen more frequently together, until at last people would say: 'Those two mean to make a match of it.' And then, one day, openly, in the sight of all men, with the aid of the law and the church, they would resume those relations that existed before the man ran away and the woman followed."

There was a short silence.

Hemingway broke it in a tone that would accept no denial.

"You can't talk like that to *me*," he cried. "What do you mean?"

Without resentment, the consul regarded him with grave solicitude. His look was one of real affection, and, although his tone held the absolute

finality of the family physician who delivers a sentence of death, he spoke with gentleness and regret.

"I mean," he said, "that Mrs. Adair is not a widow, that the man she speaks of as her late husband is not dead; that that man is Fearing!"

Hemingway felt afraid. A month before a rhinoceros had charged him and had dropped at his feet. At another time a wounded lioness had leaped into his path and crouched to spring. Then he had not been afraid. Then he had aimed as confidently as though he were firing at a straw target. But now he felt real fear: fear of something he did not comprehend, of a situation he could not master, of an adversary as strong as Fate. By a word something had been snatched from him that he now knew was as dear to him as life, that *was* life, that was what made it worth continuing. And he could do nothing to prevent it; he could not help himself. He was as impotent as the prisoner who hears the judge banish him into exile. He tried to adjust his mind to the calamity. But his mind refused. As easily as with his finger a man can block the swing of a pendulum and halt the progress of the clock, Harris with a word had brought the entire world to a full stop.

And then, above his head, Hemingway heard

the lazy whisper of the punka, and from the harbor the raucous whistle of the *Crown Prince Eitel*, signalling her entrance. The world had not stopped; for the punka-boy, for the captain of the German steamer, for Harris seated with face averted, the world was still going gayly and busily forward. Only for him had it stopped.

In spite of the confident tone in which Harris had spoken, in spite of the fact that unless he knew it was the truth, he would not have spoken, Hemingway tried to urge himself to believe there had been some hideous, absurd error. But in answer came back to him snatches of talk or phrases the girl had last addressed to him: "You can command the future, but you cannot change the past. I cannot marry you, or *any one! I am not free!*"

And then to comfort himself, he called up the look he had surprised in her eyes when he stood holding her hands in his. He clung to it, as a drowning man will clutch even at a piece of floating seaweed.

When he tried to speak he found his voice choked and stifled, and that his distress was evident, he knew from the pity he read in the eyes of Harris.

In a voice strange to him, he heard himself saying: "*Why* do you think that? You've *got* to tell

me. I have a right to know. This morning I asked Mrs. Adair to marry me."

The consul exclaimed with dismay and squirmed unhappily. "I didn't know," he protested. "I thought I was in time. I ought to have told you days ago, but——"

"Tell me now," commanded Hemingway.

"I know it in a thousand ways," began Harris.

Hemingway raised his eyes hopefully.

But the consul shook his head. "But to convince you," he went on, "I need tell you only one. The thousand other proofs are looks they have exchanged, sentences I have chanced to overhear, and that each of them unknown to the other has told me of little happenings and incidents which I found were common to both. Each has described the house in which he or she lived, and it was the same house. They *claim* to come from different cities in New England, they came from the *same* city. They claim——"

"That is no proof," cried Hemingway, "either that they are married, or that the man is a criminal."

For a moment Harris regarded the other in silence. Then he said: "You're making it very hard for me. I see I've got to show you. It's kindest, after all, to cut quick." He leaned farther for-

ward, and his voice dropped. Speaking quickly, he said:

"Last summer I lived outside the town in a bungalow on the Pearl Road. Fearing's house was next to mine. This was before Mrs. Adair went to live at the agency, and while she was alone in another bungalow farther down the road. I was ill that summer; my nerves went back on me. I couldn't sleep. I used to sit all night on my veranda and pray for the sun to rise. From where I sat it was dark and no one could see me, but I could see the veranda of Fearing's house and into his garden. And night after night I saw Mrs. Adair creep out of Fearing's house, saw him walk with her to the gate, saw him in the shadow of the bushes take her in his arms, and saw them kiss." The voice of the consul rose sharply. "No one knows that but you and I, and," he cried defiantly, "it is impossible for us to believe ill of Polly Adair. The easy explanation we refuse. It is intolerable. And so you must believe as I believe; that when she visited Fearing by night she went to him because she had the right to go to him, because already she was his wife. And now when every one here believes they met for the first time in Zanzibar, when no one will be surprised if they should marry, they will go through the ceremony again,

and live as man and wife, as they are, as they were before he fled from America!"

Hemingway was seated with his elbows on the table and his face in his hands. He was so long silent that Harris struck the table roughly with his palm.

"Well," he demanded, "why don't you speak? Do you doubt her? Don't you believe she is his wife?"

"I refuse to believe anything else!" said Hemingway. He rose, and slowly and heavily moved toward the door. "And I will not trouble them any more," he added. "I'll leave at sunrise on the *Eitel*."

Harris exclaimed in dismay, but Hemingway did not hear him. In the doorway he halted and turned back. From his voice all trace of emotion had departed. "Why," he asked dully, "do you think Fearing is a fugitive? Not that it matters to her, since she loves him, or that it matters to me. Only I would like to think you were wrong. I want her to have only the best."

Again the consul moved unhappily.

"I oughtn't to tell you," he protested, "and if I do I ought to tell the state department, and a detective agency first. They have the call. They want him, or a man damned like him." His voice

dropped to a whisper. "The man wanted is Henry Brownell, a cashier of a bank in Waltham, Mass., thirty-five years of age, smooth-shaven, college-bred, speaking with a marked New England accent, and—and with other marks that fit Fearing like the cover on a book. The department and the Pinkertons have been devilling the life out of me about it for nine months. They are positive he is on the coast of Africa. I put them off. I wasn't sure."

"You've been protecting them," said Hemingway.

"I wasn't sure," reiterated Harris. "And if I were, the Pinkertons can do their own sleuthing. The man's living honestly now, anyway, isn't he?" he demanded; "and she loves him. At least she's stuck by him. Why should I punish *her?*"

His tone seemed to challenge and upbraid.

"Good God!" cried the other, "I'm not blaming you! I'd be proud of the chance to do as much. I asked because I'd like to go away thinking she's content, thinking she's happy with him."

"Doesn't it look as though she were?" Harris protested. "She's followed him—followed him half around the globe. If she'd been happier away from him, she'd have stayed away from him."

So intent had been the men upon their talk that neither had noted the passing of the minutes or, what at other times was an event of moment, that the mail steamer had distributed her mail and passengers; and when a servant entered bearing lamps, and from the office the consul's clerk appeared with a bundle of letters from the *Eitel*, both were taken by surprise.

"So late?" exclaimed Hemingway. "I must go. If I'm to sail with the *Eitel* at daybreak, I've little time!"

But he did not go.

As he advanced toward Harris with his hand outstretched in adieu, the face of the consul halted him. With the letters, the clerk had placed upon the table a visiting-card, and as it lay in the circle of light from the lamp the consul, as though it were alive and menacing, stared at it in fascination. Moving stiffly, he turned it so that Hemingway could see. On it Hemingway read, "George S. Sheyer," and, on a lower line, "Representing William L. Pinkerton."

To the woman he loved the calamity they dreaded had come, and Hemingway, with a groan of dismay, exclaimed aloud:

"It is the end!"

From the darkness of the outer office a man

stepped softly into the circle of the lamp. They could see his figure only from the waist down; the rest of him was blurred in shadows.

"'It is the end'?" he repeated inquiringly. He spoke the phrase with peculiar emphasis, as though to impress it upon the memory of the two others. His voice was cool, alert, authoritative. "The end of what?" he demanded sharply.

The question was most difficult. In the silence the detective moved into the light. He was tall and strongly built, his face was shrewd and intelligent. He might have been a prosperous man of business.

"Which of you is the consul?" he asked. But he did not take his eyes from Hemingway.

"I am the consul," said Harris. But still the detective did not turn from Hemingway.

"Why," he asked, "did this gentleman, when he read my card, say, 'It is the end'? The end of what? Has anything been going on here that came to an end when he saw my card?"

Disconcerted, in deep embarrassment, Harris struggled for a word. But his distress was not observed by the detective. His eyes, suspicious and accusing, still were fixed upon Hemingway, and under their scrutiny Harris saw his friend slowly retreat, slowly crumple up into a chair, slowly

raise his hands to cover his face. As though in a nightmare, he heard him saying savagely:

"It is the end of two years of hell, it is the end of two years of fear and agony! Now I shall have peace. Now I shall sleep! I thank God you've come! I thank God I can go back!"

Harris broke the spell by leaping to his feet. He sprang between the two men.

"What does this mean?" he commanded.

Hemingway raised his eyes and surveyed him steadily.

"It means," he said, "that I have deceived you, Harris—that I am the man you told me of, I am the man they want." He turned to the officer.

"I fooled him for four months," he said. "I couldn't fool you for five minutes."

The eyes of the detective danced with sudden excitement, joy, and triumph. He shot an eager glance from Hemingway to the consul.

"This man," he demanded; "who is he?"

With an impatient gesture Hemingway signified Harris.

"*He* doesn't know who I am," he said. "He knows me as Hemingway. I am Henry Brownell, of Waltham, Mass." Again his face sank into the palms of his hands. "And I'm tired—tired," he

moaned. "I am sick of not knowing, sick of running away. I give myself up."

The detective breathed a sigh of relief that seemed to issue from his soul.

"My God," he sighed, "you've given me a long chase! I've had eleven months of you, and I'm as sick of this as you are." He recovered himself sharply. As though reciting an incantation, he addressed Hemingway in crisp, emotionless notes.

"Henry Brownell," he chanted, "I arrest you in the name of the commonwealth of Massachusetts for the robbery, on October the eleventh, nineteen hundred and nine, of the Waltham Title and Trust Company. I understand," he added, "you waive extradition and return with me of your own free will?"

With his face still in his hands, Hemingway murmured assent. The detective stepped briskly and uninvited to the table and seated himself. He was beaming with triumph, with pleasurable excitement.

"I want to send a message home, Mr. Consul," he said. "May I use your cable blanks?"

Harris was still standing in the centre of the room looking down upon the bowed head and shoulders of Hemingway. Since, in amazement,

he had sprung toward him, he had not spoken. And he was still silent.

Inside the skull of Wilbur Harris, of Iowa, U. S. A., American consul to Zanzibar, East Africa, there was going forward a mighty struggle that was not fit to put into words. For Harris and his conscience had met and were at odds. One way or the other the fight must be settled at once, and whatever he decided must be for all time. This he understood, and as his sympathies and conscience struggled for the mastery the pen of the detective, scratching at racing speed across the paper, warned him that only a few seconds were left him in which to protest or else to forever after hold his peace.

So realistic had been the acting of Hemingway that for an instant Harris himself had been deceived. But only for an instant. With his knowledge of the circumstances he saw that Hemingway was not confessing to a crime of his own, but drawing across the trail of the real criminal the convenient and useful red herring. He knew that already Hemingway had determined to sail the next morning. In leaving Zanzibar he was making no sacrifice. He merely was carrying out his original plan, and by taking away with him the detective was giving Brownell and his

wife at least a month in which to again lose themselves.

What was his own duty he could not determine. That of Hemingway he knew nothing, he could truthfully testify. And if now Hemingway claimed to be Henry Brownell, he had no certain knowledge to the contrary. That through his adventure Hemingway would come to harm did not greatly disturb him. He foresaw that his friend need only send a wireless from Nantucket and at the wharf witnesses would swarm to establish his identity and make it evident the detective had blundered. And in the meanwhile Brownell and his wife, in some settlement still further removed from observation, would for the second time have fortified themselves against pursuit and capture. He saw the eyes of Hemingway fixed upon him in appeal and warning.

The brisk voice of the detective broke the silence.

"You will testify, if need be, Mr. Consul," he said, "that you heard the prisoner admit he was Henry Brownell and that he surrendered himself of his own free will?"

For an instant the consul hesitated, then he nodded stiffly.

"I heard him," he said.

Three hours later, at ten o'clock of the same evening, the detective and Hemingway leaned together on the rail of the *Crown Prince Eitel.* Forward, in the glare of her cargo lights, to the puffing and creaking of derricks and donkey engines, bundles of beeswax, of rawhides, and precious tusks of ivory were being hurled into the hold; from the shore-boats clinging to the ship's sides came the shrieks of the Zanzibar boys, from the smoking-room the blare of the steward's band and the clink of glasses. Those of the youth of Zanzibar who were on board, the German and English clerks and agents, saw in the presence of Hemingway only a purpose similar to their own; the desire of a homesick exile to gaze upon the mirrored glories of the *Eitel's* saloon, at the faces of white men and women, to listen to home-made music, to drink home-brewed beer. As he passed the smoking-room they called to him, and to the stranger at his elbow, but he only nodded smiling and, avoiding them, ascended to the shadow of the deserted boat-deck.

"You are sure," he said, "you told no one?"

"No one," the detective answered. "Of course your hotel proprietor knows you're sailing, but he doesn't know *why.* And, by sunrise, we'll be well out at sea."

The words caught Hemingway by the throat. He turned his eyes to the town lying like a field of snow in the moonlight. Somewhere on one of its flat roofs a merry dinner party was laughing, drinking, perhaps regretting his absence, wondering at his excuse of sudden illness. She was there, and he with the detective like a shadow at his elbow, was sailing out of her life forever. He had seen her for the last time: that morning for the last time had looked into her eyes, had held her hands in his. He saw the white beach, the white fortress-like walls, the hanging gardens, the curtseying palms, dimly. It was among those that he who had thought himself content, had found happiness, and had then seen it desert him and take out of his life pleasure in all other things. With a pain that seemed impossible to support, he turned his back upon Zanzibar and all it meant to him. And, as he turned, he faced, coming toward him, across the moonlit deck, Fearing.

His instinct was to cry out to the man in warning, but his second thought showed him that through his very effort to protect the other, he might bring about his undoing. So, helpless to prevent, in agitation and alarm, he waited in silence. Of the two men, Fearing appeared the least disturbed. With a polite but authoritative

gesture he turned to the detective. "I have something to say to this gentleman before he sails," he said; "would you kindly stand over there?"

He pointed across the empty deck at the other rail.

In the alert, confident young man in the English mess-jacket, clean shaven and bronzed by the suns of the equator, the detective saw no likeness to the pale, bearded bank clerk of the New England city. This, he guessed, must be some English official, some friend of Brownell's who generously had come to bid the unfortunate fugitive Godspeed.

Assured of this, the detective also bowed politely, and, out of hearing, but with his prisoner in full view, took up a position against the rail opposite.

Turning his back upon the detective, and facing Hemingway with his eyes close to his, Fearing began abruptly. His voice was sunk to a whisper, but he spoke without the slightest sign of trepidation, without the hesitation of an instant.

"Two years ago, when I was indicted," he whispered, "and ran away, Polly paid back half of the sum I stole. That left her without a penny; that's why she took to this typewriting. Since then, I have paid back nearly all the rest. But Polly

was not satisfied. She wanted me to take my punishment and start fresh. She knew they were watching her so she couldn't write this to me, but she came to me by a roundabout way, taking a year to get here. And all the time she's been here, she's been begging me to go back and give myself up. I couldn't see it. I knew in a few months I'd have paid back all I took, and I thought that was enough. I wanted to keep out of jail. But she said I must take my medicine in our own country, and start square with a clean slate. She's done a lot for me, and whether I'd have done that for her or not, I don't know. But now, I must! What you did to-night to save me, leaves me no choice. So, I'll sail——"

With an exclamation of anger, Hemingway caught the other by the shoulder and dragged him closer.

"To save *you!*" he whispered. "No one's thinking of *you.* I didn't do it for *you.* I did it, that you both could escape together, to give you time——"

"But I tell you," protested Fearing, "she doesn't want me to escape. And maybe she's right. Anyway, we're sailing with you at——"

"We?" echoed Hemingway.

That again he was to see the woman he loved,

that for six weeks through summer seas he would travel in her company, filled him with alarm, with distress, with a wonderful happiness.

"We?" he whispered, steadying his voice. "Then—then your wife is going with you?"

Fearing gazed at him as though the other had suddenly gone mad.

"My *wife!*" he exclaimed. "I haven't got a wife! If you mean Polly—Mrs. Adair, she is my sister! And she wants to thank you. She's below——"

He was not allowed to finish. Hemingway had flung him to one side, and was racing down the deck.

The detective sprang in pursuit.

"One moment, there!" he shouted.

But the man in the white mess-jacket barred his way.

In the moonlight the detective saw that the alert, bronzed young man was smiling.

"That's all right," said Fearing. "He'll be back in a minute. Besides, you don't want him. *I'm* the man you want."

THE LONG ARM

THE LONG ARM

THE safe was an old one that opened with a key. As adjutant, Captain Swanson had charge of certain funds of the regiment and kept in the safe about five thousand dollars. No one but himself and Rueff, his first sergeant, had access to it. And as Rueff proved an alibi, the money might have been removed by an outsider. The court martial gave Swanson the benefit of the doubt, and a reprimand for not taking greater care of the keys, and Swanson made good the five thousand.

Swanson did not think it was a burglar who had robbed the safe. He thought Rueff had robbed it, but he could not possibly prove that. At the time of the robbery Rueff was outside the Presidio, in uniform, at a moving-picture show in San Francisco. A dozen people saw him there. Besides, Rueff held an excellent record. He was a silent, clerk-like young man, better at "paper work" than campaigning, but even as a soldier he had never come upon the books. And he had seen service in two campaigns, and was supposed

to cherish ambitions toward a commission. But, as he kept much to himself, his fellow non-coms could only guess that.

On his captain's account he was loyally distressed over the court-martial, and in his testimony tried to shield Swanson, by agreeing heartily that through his own carelessness the keys might have fallen into the hands of some one outside the post. But his loyalty could not save his superior officer from what was a verdict virtually of "not proven."

It was a most distressing affair, and, on account of the social prominence of Swanson's people, his own popularity, and the name he had made at Batangas and in the Boxer business, was much commented upon, not only in the services, but by the newspapers all over the United States.

Every one who knew Swanson knew the court-martial was only a matter of form. Even his enemies ventured only to suggest that overnight he might have borrowed the money, meaning to replace it the next morning. And the only reason for considering this explanation was that Swanson was known to be in debt. For he was a persistent gambler. Just as at Pekin he had gambled with death for his number, in times of peace he gambled for money. It was always his own money.

From the start Swanson's own attitude toward the affair was one of blind, unreasoning rage. In it he saw no necessary routine of discipline, only crass, ignorant stupidity. That any one should suspect him was so preposterous, so unintelligent, as to be nearly comic. And when, instantly, he demanded a court of inquiry, he could not believe it when he was summoned before a court martial. It sickened, wounded, deeply affronted him; turned him quite savage.

On the stand his attitude and answers were so insolent that his old friend and classmate, Captain Copley, who was acting as his counsel, would gladly have kicked him. The findings of the court martial, that neither cleared nor condemned, and the reprimand, were an intolerable insult to his feelings, and, in a fit of bitter disgust with the service and every one in it, Swanson resigned. Of course, the moment he had done so he was sorry. Swanson's thought was that he could no longer associate with any one who could believe him capable of theft. It was his idea of showing his own opinion of himself and the army.

But no one saw it in that light. On the contrary, people said: "Swanson has been allowed to resign." In the army, voluntarily resigning and being "allowed to resign" lest greater evils befall,

are two vastly different things. And when it was too late no one than Swanson saw that more clearly. His anger gave way to extreme morbidness. He believed that in resigning he had assured every one of his guilt. In every friend and stranger he saw a man who doubted him. He imagined snubs, rebuffs, and coldnesses. His morbidness fastened upon his mind like a parasite upon a tree, and the brain sickened. When men and women glanced at his alert, well-set-up figure and shoulders, that even when he wore "cits" seemed to support epaulets, and smiled approvingly, Swanson thought they sneered. In a week he longed to be back in the army with a homesickness that made every one who belonged to it his enemy.

He left San Francisco, where he was known to all, and travelled south through Texas, and then to New Orleans and Florida. He never could recall this period with clearness. He remembered changing from one train to another, from one hotel to the next. Nothing impressed itself upon him. For what he had lost nothing could give consolation. Without honor life held no charm. And he believed that in the eyes of all men he was a thief, a pariah, and an outcast.

He had been in Cuba with the Army of Occupation, and of that beautiful island had grown fool-

ishly fond. He was familiar with every part of it, and he believed in one or another of its pretty ports he could so completely hide himself that no one could intrude upon his misery. In the States, in the newspapers he seemed to read only of those places where he had seen service, of those places and friends and associates he most loved. In the little Cuban village in which he would bury himself he would cut himself off from all newspapers, from all who knew him; from those who had been his friends, and those who knew his name only to connect it with a scandal.

On his way from Port Tampa to Cuba the boat stopped at Key West, and for the hour in which she discharged cargo Swanson went ashore and wandered aimlessly. The little town, reared on a flat island of coral and limestone, did not long detain him. The main street of shops, eating-houses, and saloons, the pretty residences with overhanging balconies, set among gardens and magnolia-trees, were soon explored, and he was returning to the boat when the martial music of a band caused him to halt. A side street led to a great gateway surmounted by an anchor. Beyond it Swanson saw lawns of well-kept grass, regular paths, pretty cottages, the two-starred flag of an admiral, and, rising high above these, like four Eiffel towers,

the gigantic masts of a wireless. He recognized that he was at the entrance to the Key West naval station, and turned quickly away.

He walked a few feet, the music of the band still in his ears. In an hour he would be steaming toward Cuba, and, should he hold to his present purpose, in many years this would be the last time he would stand on American soil, would see the uniform of his country, would hear a military band lull the sun to sleep. It would hurt, but he wondered if it were not worth the hurt. A smart sergeant of marines, in passing, cast one glance at the man who seemed always to wear epaulets, and brought his hand sharply to salute. The act determined Swanson. He had obtained the salute under false pretences, but it had pleased, not hurt, him. He turned back and passed into the gate of the naval station.

From the gate a grass-lined carriage drive led to the waters of the harbor and the wharves. At its extreme end was the band-stand, flanked on one side by the cottage of the admiral, on the other by a sail-loft with iron-barred windows and white-washed walls. Upon the turf were pyramids of cannon-balls and, laid out in rows as though awaiting burial, old-time muzzle-loading guns. Across the harbor the sun was sinking into the coral reefs,

and the spring air, still warm from its caresses, was stirred by the music of the band into gentle, rhythmic waves. The scene was one of peace, order, and content.

But as Swanson advanced, the measure of the music was instantly shattered by a fierce volley of explosions. They came so suddenly and sharply as to make him start. It was as though from his flank a quick-firing gun in ambush had opened upon him. Swanson smiled at having been taken unawares. For in San Francisco he often had heard the roar and rattle of the wireless. But never before had he listened to an attack like this.

From a tiny white-and-green cottage, squatting among the four giant masts, came the roar of a forest fire. One could hear the crackle of the flames, the crash of the falling tree-trunks. The air about the cottage was torn into threads; beneath the shocks of the electricity the lawn seemed to heave and tremble. It was like some giant monster, bound and fettered, struggling to be free. Now it growled sullenly, now in impotent rage it spat and spluttered, now it lashed about with crashing, stunning blows. It seemed as though the wooden walls of the station could not contain it.

From the road Swanson watched, through the

open windows of the cottage, the electric bolts flash and flare and disappear. The thing appealed to his imagination. Its power, its capabilities fascinated him. In it he saw a hungry monster reaching out to every corner of the continent and devouring the news of the world; feeding upon tales of shipwreck and disaster, lingering over some dainty morsel of scandal, snatching from ships and cities two thousand miles away the thrice-told tale of a conflagration, the score of a baseball match, the fall of a cabinet, the assassination of a king.

In a sudden access of fierceness, as though in an ecstasy over some fresh horror just received, it shrieked and chortled. And then, as suddenly as it had broken forth, it sank to silence, and from the end of the carriage drive again rose, undisturbed, the music of the band.

The musicians were playing to a select audience. On benches around the band-stand sat a half dozen nurse-maids with knitting in their hands, the baby-carriages within arm's length. On the turf older children of the officers were at play, and up and down the paths bareheaded girls, and matrons, and officers in uniform strolled leisurely. From the vine-covered cottage of Admiral Preble, set in a garden of flowering plants and bending palmettos, came the tinkle of tea-cups and the ripple of

laughter, and at a respectful distance, seated on the dismantled cannon, were marines in khaki and bluejackets in glistening white.

It was a family group, and had not Swanson recognized among the little audience others of the passengers from the steamer and natives of the town who, like himself, had been attracted by the music, he would have felt that he intruded. He now wished to remain. He wanted to carry with him into his exile a memory of the men in uniform, of the music, and pretty women, of the gorgeous crimson sunset. But, though he wished to remain, he did not wish to be recognized.

From the glances already turned toward him, he saw that in this little family gathering the presence of a stranger was an event, and he was aware that during the trial the newspapers had made his face conspicuous. Also it might be that stationed at the post was some officer or enlisted man who had served with him in Cuba, China, or the Philippines, and who might point him out to others. Fearing this, Swanson made a detour and approached the band-stand from the wharf, and with his back to a hawser-post seated himself upon the string-piece.

He was overcome with an intolerable melancholy. From where he sat he could see, softened

into shadows by the wire screens of the veranda, Admiral Preble and his wife and their guests at tea. A month before, he would have reported to the admiral as the commandant of the station, and paid his respects. Now he could not do that; at least not without inviting a rebuff. A month before, he need only have shown his card to the admiral's orderly, and the orderly and the guard and the officers' mess and the admiral himself would have turned the post upside down to do him honor. But of what avail now was his record in three campaigns? Of what avail now was his medal of honor? They now knew him as Swanson, who had been court-martialled, who had been allowed to resign, who had left the army for the army's good; they knew him as a civilian without rank or authority, as an ex-officer who had robbed his brother officers, as an outcast.

His position, as his morbid mind thus distorted it, tempted Swanson no longer. For being in this plight he did not feel that in any way he was to blame. But with a flaming anger he still blamed his brother officers of the court martial who had not cleared his name and with a clean bill of health restored him to duty. Those were the men he blamed; not Rueff, the sergeant, who he believed had robbed him, nor himself, who, in a passion of

wounded pride, had resigned and so had given reason for gossip; but the men who had not in tones like a bugle-call proclaimed his innocence, who, when they had handed him back his sword, had given it grudgingly, not with congratulation.

As he saw it, he stood in a perpetual pillory. When they had robbed him of his honor they had left him naked, and life without honor had lost its flavor. He could eat, he could drink, he could exist. He knew that in many corners of the world white arms would reach out to him and men would beckon him to a place at table.

But he could not cross that little strip of turf between him and the chattering group on the veranda and hand his card to the admiral's orderly. Swanson loved life. He loved it so that without help, money, or affection he could each morning have greeted it with a smile. But life without honor! He felt a sudden hot nausea of disgust. Why was he still clinging to what had lost its purpose, to what lacked the one thing needful?

"If life be an ill thing," he thought, "I can lay it down!"

The thought was not new to him, and during the two past weeks of aimless wandering he had carried with him his service automatic. To reas-

sure himself he laid his fingers on its cold smooth surface. He would wait, he determined, until the musicians had finished their concert and the women and children had departed, and then——

Then the orderly would find him where he was now seated, sunken against the hawser-post with a hole through his heart. To his disordered brain his decision appeared quite sane. He was sure he never had been more calm. And as he prepared himself for death he assured himself that for one of his standard no other choice was possible. Thoughts of the active past, or of what distress in the future his act would bring to others, did not disturb him. The thing had to be, no one lost more heavily than himself, and regrets were cowardly.

He counted the money he had on his person and was pleased to find there was enough to pay for what services others soon must render him. In his pockets were letters, cards, a cigarette-case, each of which would tell his identity. He had no wish to conceal it, for of what he was about to do he was not ashamed. It was not his act. He would not have died "by his own hand." To his unbalanced brain the officers of the court martial were responsible. It was they who had killed him. As he saw it, they had made his death as in-

evitable as though they had sentenced him to be shot at sunrise.

A line from "The Drums of the Fore and Aft" came back to him. Often he had quoted it, when some one in the service had suffered through the fault of others. It was the death-cry of the boy officer, Devlin. The knives of the Ghazi had cut him down, but it was his own people's abandoning him in terror that had killed him. And so, with a sob, he flung the line at the retreating backs of his comrades: "You've killed me, you cowards!"

Swanson, nursing his anger, repeated this savagely. He wished he could bring it home to those men of the court martial. He wished he could make them know that his death lay at their door. He determined that they should know. On one of his visiting-cards he pencilled:

"To the Officers of my Court Martial: 'You've killed me, you cowards!'"

He placed the card in the pocket of his waistcoat. They would find it just above the place where the bullet would burn the cloth.

The band was playing "Auf Wiedersehen," and the waltz carried with it the sadness that had made people call the man who wrote it the waltz king. Swanson listened gratefully. He was glad that be-

fore he went out, his last mood had been of regret and gentleness. The sting of his anger had departed, the music soothed and sobered him. It had been a very good world. Until he had broken the spine of things it had treated him well, far better, he admitted, than he deserved. There were many in it who had been kind, to whom he was grateful. He wished there was some way by which he could let them know that. As though in answer to his wish, from across the parade-ground the wireless again began to crash and crackle; but now Swanson was at a greater distance from it, and the sighing rhythm of the waltz was not interrupted.

Swanson considered to whom he might send a farewell message, but as in his mind he passed from one friend to another, he saw that to each such a greeting could bring only distress. He decided it was the music that had led him astray. This was no moment for false sentiment. He let his hand close upon the pistol.

The audience now was dispersing. The nursemaids had collected their charges, the musicians were taking apart their music-racks, and from the steps of the vine-covered veranda Admiral Preble was bidding the friends of his wife adieu. At his side his aide, young, alert, confident, with ill-con-

cealed impatience awaited their departure. Swanson found that he resented the aide. He resented the manner in which he speeded the parting guests. Even if there were matters of importance he was anxious to communicate to his chief, he need not make it plain to the women folk that they were in the way.

When, a month before, he had been adjutant, in a like situation he would have shown more self-command. He disapproved of the aide entirely. He resented the fact that he was as young as himself, that he was in uniform, that he was an aide. Swanson certainly hoped that when *he* was in uniform he had not looked so much the conquering hero, so self-satisfied, so supercilious. With a smile he wondered why, at such a moment, a man he had never seen before, and never would see again, should so disturb him.

In his heart he knew. The aide was going forward just where he was leaving off. The ribbons on the tunic of the aide, the straps on his shoulders, told Swanson that they had served in the same campaigns, that they were of the same relative rank, and that when he himself, had he remained in the service, would have been a brigadier-general the aide would command a battle-ship. The possible future of the young sailor filled Swan-

son with honorable envy and bitter regret. With all his soul he envied him the right to look his fellow man in the eye, his right to die for his country, to give his life, should it be required of him, for ninety million people, for a flag. Swanson saw the two officers dimly, with eyes of bitter self-pity. He was dying, but he was not dying gloriously for a flag. He had lost the right to die for it, and he was dying because he had lost that right.

The sun had sunk and the evening had grown chill. At the wharf where the steamer lay on which he had arrived, but on which he was not to depart, the electric cargo-lights were already burning. But for what Swanson had to do there still was light enough. From his breast-pocket he took the card on which he had written his message to his brother officers, read and reread it, and replaced it.

Save for the admiral and his aide at the steps of the cottage, and a bareheaded bluejacket who was reporting to them, and the admiral's orderly, who was walking toward Swanson, no one was in sight. Still seated upon the string-piece of the wharf, Swanson so moved that his back was toward the four men. The moment seemed propitious, almost as though it had been prearranged. For with such an audience, for his taking off no other

person could be blamed. There would be no question but that death had been self-inflicted.

Approaching from behind him Swanson heard the brisk steps of the orderly drawing rapidly nearer. He wondered if the wharf were government property, if he were trespassing, and if for that reason the man had been sent to order him away. He considered bitterly that the government grudged him a place even in which to die. Well, he would not for long be a trespasser. His hand slipped into his pocket, with his thumb he lowered the safety-catch of the pistol.

But the hand with the pistol in it did not leave his pocket. The steps of the orderly had come to a sudden silence. Raising his head heavily, Swanson saw the man, with his eyes fixed upon him, standing at salute. They had first made his life unsupportable, Swanson thought, now they would not let him leave it.

"Captain Swanson, sir?" asked the orderly.

Swanson did not speak or move.

"The admiral's compliments, sir," snapped the orderly, "and will the captain please speak with him?"

Still Swanson did not move.

He felt that the breaking-point of his self-control had come. This impertinent interruption, this

thrusting into the last few seconds of his life of a reminder of all that he had lost, this futile postponement of his end, was cruel, unhuman, unthinkable. The pistol was still in his hand. He had but to draw it and press it close, and before the marine could leap upon him he would have escaped.

From behind, approaching hurriedly, came the sound of impatient footsteps.

The orderly stiffened to attention. "The admiral!" he warned.

Twelve years of discipline, twelve years of recognition of authority, twelve years of deference to superior officers, dragged Swanson's hand from his pistol and lifted him to his feet. As he turned, Admiral Preble, the aide, and the bareheaded bluejacket were close upon him. The admiral's face beamed, his eyes were young with pleasurable excitement; with the eagerness of a boy he waved aside formal greetings.

"My dear Swanson," he cried, "I assure you it's a most astonishing, most curious coincidence! See this man?" He flung out his arm at the bluejacket. "He's my wireless chief. He was wireless operator on the transport that took you to Manila. When you came in here this afternoon he recognized you. Half an hour later he picks up a mes-

sage—picks it up two thousand miles from here —from San Francisco—Associated Press news— it concerns you; that is, not really concerns you, but I thought, we thought"—as though signalling for help, the admiral glanced unhappily at his aide —"we thought you'd like to know. Of course, to us," he added hastily, "it's quite superfluous— quite superfluous, but——"

The aide coughed apologetically. "You might read, sir," he suggested.

"What? Exactly! Quite so!" cried the admiral.

In the fading light he held close to his eyes a piece of paper.

"San Francisco, April 20," he read. "Rueff, first sergeant, shot himself here to-day, leaving written confession theft of regimental funds for which Swanson, captain, lately court-martialled. Money found intact in Rueff's mattress. Innocence of Swanson never questioned, but dissatisfied with findings of court martial has left army. Brother officers making every effort to find him and persuade return."

The admiral sighed happily. "And my wife," he added, with an impressiveness that was intended to show he had at last arrived at the important part of his message, "says you are to stay to dinner."

Abruptly, rudely, Swanson swung upon his heel and turned his face from the admiral. His head was thrown back, his arms held rigid at his sides. In slow, deep breaths, like one who had been dragged from drowning, he drank in the salt, chill air. After one glance the four men also turned, and in the falling darkness stood staring at nothing, and no one spoke.

The aide was the first to break the silence. In a polite tone, as though he were continuing a conversation which had not been interrupted, he addressed the admiral. "Of course, Rueff's written confession was not needed," he said. "His shooting himself proved that he was guilty."

Swanson started as though across his naked shoulders the aide had drawn a whip.

In penitence and gratitude he raised his eyes to the stars. High above his head the strands of the wireless, swinging from the towering masts like the strings of a giant æolian harp, were swept by the wind from the ocean. To Swanson the sighing and whispering wires sang in praise and thanksgiving.

THE GOD OF COINCIDENCE

THE GOD OF COINCIDENCE

THE God of Coincidence is fortunate in possessing innumerable press agents. They have made the length of his arm a proverb. How at exactly the right moment he extends it across continents and drags two and two together, thus causing four to result where but for him sixes and sevens would have obtained, they have made known to the readers of all of our best magazines. For instance, Holworthy is leaving for the Congo to find a cure for the sleeping sickness, and for himself any sickness from which one is warranted never to wake up. This is his condition because the beautiful million-heiress who is wintering at the Alexander Young Hotel in Honolulu has refused to answer his letters, cables, and appeals.

He is leaning upon the rail taking his last neck-breaking look at the Woolworth building. The going-ashore bugle has sounded, pocket-handkerchiefs are waving; and Joe Hutton, the last visitor to leave the ship, is at the gangway.

"Good-by, Holworthy!" he calls. "Where do you keep yourself? Haven't seen you at the club in a year!"

"Haven't been there in a year—nor mean to!" is the ungracious reply of our hero.

"Then, for Heaven's sake," exclaims Hutton, "send some one to take your mail out of the H box! Every time I look for letters I wade through yours."

"Tear them up!" calls Holworthy. "They're bills."

Hutton now is half-way down the gangplank.

"Then your creditors," he shouts back, "must all live at the Alexander Young Hotel in Honolulu!"

That night an express train shrieking through the darkness carried with it toward San Francisco——

In this how evident is the fine Italian hand of the God of Coincidence!

Had Hutton's name begun with an M; had the H in Hutton been silent; had he not carried to the *Mauretania* a steamer basket for his rich aunt; had he not resented the fact that since Holworthy's election to the Van Sturtevant Club he had ceased to visit the Grill Club—a cure for sleeping sickness might have been discovered; but two lov-

ing hearts never would have been reunited and that story would not have been written.

Or, Mrs. Montclair, with a suit-case, is leaving her home forever to join handsome Harry Bellairs, who is at the corner with a racing-car and all the money of the bank of which he has been cashier. As the guilty woman places the farewell letter against the pin-cushion where her husband will be sure to find it, her infant son turns in his sleep and jabs himself with a pin. His howl of anguish resembles that of a puppy on a moonlight night. The mother recognizes her master's voice. She believes her child dying, flies to the bedside, tears up the letter, unpacks the suit-case. The next morning at breakfast her husband, reading the newspaper, exclaims aloud:

"Harry Bellairs," he cries, "has skipped with the bank's money! I always told you he was not a man you ought to know."

"His manner to me," she says severely, "always was that of a perfect gentleman."

Again coincidence gets the credit. Had not the child tossed—had not at the critical moment the safety pin proved untrue to the man who invented it—that happy family reunion would have been impossible.

Or, it might be told this way:

The God of Coincidence

Old man McCurdy, the Pig-Iron King, forbids his daughter Gwendolyn even to think of marrying poor but honest Beef Walters, the baseball pitcher, and denies him his house. The lovers plan an elopement. At midnight Beef is to stand at the tradesman's entrance and whistle "Waiting at the Church"; and down the silent stairs Gwendolyn is to steal into his arms. At the very same hour the butler has planned with the policeman on fixed post to steal Mother McCurdy's diamonds and pass them to a brother of the policeman, who is to wait at the tradesman's entrance and whistle "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee."

This sounds improbable—especially that the policeman would allow even his brother to get the diamonds before he did; but, with the God of Coincidence on the job, you shall see that it will all come out right. Beef is first at the door. He whistles. The butler—an English butler—with no ear for music, shoves into his hands tiaras and sunbursts. Honest Beef hands over the butler to the policeman and the tiaras to Mother McCurdy.

"How can I reward *you*?" exclaims the grateful woman.

"Your daughter's hand!"

Again the God of Coincidence scores and Beef Walters is credited with an assist. And for pre-

venting the robbery McCurdy has the peg-post cop made a captain; thus enabling him to wear diamonds of his own and raising him above the need of taking them from others.

These examples of what the god can do are mere fiction; the story that comes now really happened. It also is a story of coincidence. It shows how this time the long arm was stretched out to make two young people happy; it again illustrates that, in the instruments he chooses, the God of Coincidence works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. This time the tool he used was a hat of green felt.

The story really should be called "The Man in the Green Hat."

At St. James's Palace the plenipotentiaries of the Allies and of Turkey were trying to bring peace to Europe; in Russell Square, Bloomsbury, Sam Lowell was trying to arrange a peace with Mrs. Wroxton, his landlady. The ultimatum of the Allies was: "Adrianople or fight!" The last words of Mrs. Wroxton were: "Five pounds or move out!"

Sam did not have five pounds. He was a stranger in London; he had lost his position in New York and that very morning had refused to marry the girl he loved—Polly Seward, the young woman

the Sunday papers called "The Richest Girl in America."

For any man—for one day—that would seem to be trouble enough; but to the Sultan of Turkey that day brought troubles far more serious. And, as his losses were Sam's gain, we must follow the troubles of the Sultan. Until, with the aid of a green felt hat, the God of Coincidence turns the misfortunes of the Sultan into a fortune for Sam, Sam must wait.

From the first days of the peace conference it was evident there was a leak. The negotiations had been opened under a most solemn oath of secrecy. As to the progress of the conference, only such information or misinformation—if the diplomats considered it better—as was mutually agreed upon by the plenipotentiaries was given to a waiting world. But each morning, in addition to the official report of the proceedings of the day previous, one newspaper, the *Times*, published an account which differed from that in every other paper, and which undoubtedly came from the inside. In details it was far more generous than the official report; it gave names, speeches, arguments; it described the wordy battles of the diplomats, the concessions, bluffs, bargains.

After three days the matter became public scan-

dal. At first, the plenipotentiaries declared the events described in the *Times* were invented each evening in the office of the *Times;* but the proceedings of the day following showed the public this was not so.

Some one actually present at the conference was telling tales out of school. These tales were cabled to Belgrade, Sofia, Athens, Constantinople; and hourly from those capitals the plenipotentiaries were assailed by advice, abuse, and threats. The whole world began to take part in their negotiations; from every side they were attacked; from home by the Young Turks, or the On to Constantinople Party; and from abroad by peace societies, religious bodies, and chambers of commerce. Even the armies in the field, instead of waiting for the result of their deliberations, told them what to do, and that unless they did it they would better remain in exile. To make matters worse, in every stock exchange gambling on the news furnished by the *Times* threatened the financial peace of Europe. To work under such conditions of publicity was impossible. The delegates appealed to their hosts of the British Foreign Office.

Unless the chiel amang them takin' notes was discovered and the leak stopped, they declared the conference must end. Spurred on by questions in

Parliament, by appeals from the great banking world, by criticisms not altogether unselfish from the other newspapers, the Foreign Office surrounded St. James's Palace and the office of the *Times* with an army of spies. Every secretary, stenographer, and attendant at the conference was under surveillance, his past record looked into, his present comings and goings noted. Even the plenipotentiaries themselves were watched; and employees of the *Times* were secretly urged to sell the government the man who was selling secrets to them. But those who were willing to be "urged" did not know the man; those who did know him refused to be bought.

By a process of elimination suspicion finally rested upon one Adolf Hertz, a young Hungarian scholar who spoke and wrote all the mongrel languages of the Balkans; who for years, as a copying clerk and translator, had been employed by the Foreign Office, and who now by it had been lent to the conference. For the reason that when he lived in Budapest he was a correspondent of the *Times*, the police, in seeking for the leak, centred their attention upon Hertz. But, though every moment he was watched, and though Hertz knew he was watched, no present link between him and the *Times* had been established—and this in spite

of the fact that the hours during which it was necessary to keep him under closest observation were few. Those were the hours between the closing of the conference, and midnight, when the provincial edition of the *Times* went to press. For the remainder of the day, so far as the police cared, Hertz could go to the devil! But for those hours, except when on his return from the conference he locked himself in his lodgings in Jermyn Street, detectives were always at his elbow.

It was supposed that it was during this brief period when he was locked in his room that he wrote his report; but how, later, he conveyed it to the *Times* no one could discover. In his rooms there was no telephone; his doors and windows were openly watched; and after leaving his rooms his movements were—as they always had been—methodical, following a routine open to observation. His programme was invariably the same. Each night at seven from his front door he walked west. At Regent Street he stopped to buy an evening paper from the aged news-vender at the corner; he then crossed Piccadilly Circus into Coventry Street, skirted Leicester Square, and at the end of Green Street entered Pavoni's Italian restaurant. There he took his seat always at the same table, hung his hat always on the same brass

peg, ordered the same Hungarian wine, and read the same evening paper. He spoke to no one; no one spoke to him.

When he had finished his coffee and his cigarette he returned to his lodgings, and there he remained until he rang for breakfast. From the time at which he left his home until his return to it he spoke to only two persons—the news-vender to whom he handed a halfpenny; the waiter who served him the regular table d'hôte dinner—between whom and Hertz nothing passed but three and six for the dinner and sixpence for the waiter himself.

Each evening, the moment he moved into the street a plain-clothes man fell into step beside him; another followed at his heels; and from across the street more plain-clothes men kept their eyes on every one approaching him in front or from the rear. When he bought his evening paper six pairs of eyes watched him place a halfpenny in the hand of the news-vender, and during the entire time of his stay in Pavoni's every mouthful he ate was noted—every direction he gave the waiter was overheard.

Of this surveillance Hertz was well aware. To have been ignorant of it would have argued him blind and imbecile. But he showed no resent-

ment. With eyes grave and untroubled, he steadily regarded his escort; but not by the hastening of a footstep or the acceleration of a gesture did he admit that by his audience he was either distressed or embarrassed. That was the situation on the morning when the Treaty of London was to be signed and sealed.

In spite of the publicity given to the conference by the *Times*, however, what the terms of the treaty might be no one knew. If Adrianople were surrendered; if Salonica were given to Greece; if Servia obtained a right-of-way to the Adriatic—peace was assured; but, should the Young Turks refuse—should Austria prove obstinate—not only would the war continue, but the Powers would be involved, and that greater, more awful war—the war dreaded by all the Christian world—might turn Europe into a slaughter-house.

Would Turkey and Austria consent and peace ensue? Would they refuse and war follow? That morning those were the questions on the lips of every man in London save one. He was Sam Lowell; and he was asking himself another and more personal question: "How can I find five pounds and pacify Mrs. Wroxton?"

He had friends in New York who would cable him money to pay his passage home; but he did

not want to go home. He preferred to starve in London than be vulgarly rich anywhere else. That was not because he loved London, but because above everything in life he loved Polly Seward—and Polly Seward was in London. He had begun to love her on class day of his senior year; and, after his father died and left him with no one else to care for, every day he had loved her more.

Until a month before he had been in the office of Wetmore & Hastings, a smart brokers' firm in Wall Street. He had obtained the position not because he was of any use to Wetmore & Hastings, but because the firm was the one through which his father had gambled the money that would otherwise have gone to Sam. In giving Sam a job the firm thought it was making restitution. Sam thought it was making the punishment fit the crime; for he knew nothing of the ways of Wall Street, and having to learn them bored him extremely. He wanted to write stories for the magazines. He wanted to bind them in a book and dedicate them to Polly. And in this wish editors humored him—but not so many editors or with such enthusiasm as to warrant his turning his back on Wall Street.

That he did later when, after a tour of the world that had begun from the San Francisco side, Polly

Seward and her mother and Senator Seward reached Naples. There Senator Seward bought old Italian furniture for his office on the twenty-fifth floor of the perfectly new Seward building. Mrs. Seward tried to buy for Polly a prince nearly as old as the furniture, and Polly bought picture post-cards which she sent to Sam.

Polly had been absent six months, and Sam's endurance had been so timed as just to last out the half-year. It was not guaranteed to withstand any change of schedule, and the two months' delay in Italy broke his heart. It could not run overtime on a starvation diet of post-cards; so when he received a cable reading, "Address London, Claridge's," his heart told him it could no longer wait—and he resigned his position and sailed.

On her trip round the world Polly had learned many things. She was observant, alert, intent on asking questions, hungering for facts. And a charming young woman who seeks facts rather than attention will never lack either. But of all the facts Polly collected, the one of surpassing interest, and which gave her the greatest happiness, was that she could not live without Sam Lowell. She had suspected this, and it was partly to make sure that she had consented to the trip round the

world. Now that she had made sure, she could not too soon make up for the days lost. Sam had spent his money, and he either must return to New York and earn more or remain near Polly and starve. It was an embarrassing choice. Polly herself made the choice even more difficult.

One morning when they walked in St. James's Park to feed the ducks she said to him:

"Sam, when are we to be married?"

When for three years a man has been begging a girl to marry him, and she consents at the exact moment when, without capitulation to all that he holds honorable, he cannot marry anybody, his position deserves sympathy.

"My dear one," exclaimed the unhappy youth, "you make me the most miserable of men! I can't marry! I'm in an awful place! If I married you now I'd be a crook! It isn't a question of love in a cottage, with bread and cheese. If cottages were renting for a dollar a year I couldn't rent one for ten minutes. I haven't cheese enough to bait a mouse-trap. It's terrible! But we have got to wait."

"Wait!" cried Polly. "I thought you had been waiting! Have I been away too long? Do you love some one else?"

"Don't be ridiculous!" said Sam crossly. "Look at me," he commanded, "and tell me whom I love!"

Polly did not take time to look.

"But I," she protested, "have so much money!"

"It's not your money," explained Sam. "It's your mother's money or your father's, and both of them dislike me. They even have told me so. Your mother wants you to marry that Italian; and your father, having half the money in America, naturally wants to marry you to the other half. If I were selfish and married you I'd be all the things they think I am."

"You *are* selfish!" cried Polly. "You're thinking of yourself and of what people will say, instead of how to make me happy. What's the use of money if you can't buy what you want?"

"Are you suggesting you can buy me?" demanded Sam.

"Surely," said Polly—"if I can't get you any other way. And you may name your own price, too."

"When I am making enough to support myself without sponging on you," explained Sam, "you can have as many millions as you like; but I must first make enough to keep me alive. A man who can't do that isn't fit to marry."

"How much," demanded Polly, "do you need to keep you alive? Maybe I could lend it to you."

Sam was entirely serious.

"Three thousand a year," he said.

Polly exclaimed indignantly.

"I call that extremely extravagant!" she cried. "If we wait until you earn three thousand a year we may be dead. Do you expect to earn that writing stories?"

"I can try," said Sam—"or I will rob a bank."

Polly smiled upon him appealingly.

"You know how I love your stories," she said, "and I wouldn't hurt your feelings for the world; but, Sam dear, I think you had better rob a bank!"

Addressing an imaginary audience, supposedly of men, Sam exclaimed:

"Isn't that just like a woman? She wouldn't care," he protested, "how I got the money!"

Polly smiled cheerfully.

"Not if I got you!" she said. In extenuation, also, she addressed an imaginary audience, presumably of women. "That's how I love him!" she exclaimed. "And he asks me to wait! Isn't that just like a man? Seriously," she went on, "if we just go ahead and get married father would have to help us. He'd make you a vice-president or something."

At this suggestion Sam expressed his extreme displeasure.

"The last time I talked to your father," he said, "I was in a position to marry, and I told him I wanted to marry you. What he said to that was: 'Don't be an ass!' Then I told him he was unintelligent—and I told him why. First, because he could not see that a man might want to marry his daughter in spite of her money; and second, because he couldn't see that her money wouldn't make up to a man for having him for a father-in-law."

"Did you *have* to tell him that?" asked Polly.

"Some one had to tell him," said Sam gloomily. "Anyway, as a source of revenue father is eliminated. I have still one chance in London. If that fails I must go home. I've been promised a job in New York reporting for a Wall Street paper—and I'll write stories on the side. I've cabled for money, and if the London job falls through I shall sail Wednesday."

"Wednesday!" cried Polly. "When you say things like 'Wednesday' you make the world so dark! You *must* stay here! It has been such a long six months; and before you earn three thousand dollars I shall be an old, old maid. But if you get work *here* we could see each other every day."

They were in the Sewards' sitting-room at Claridge's. Sam took up the desk telephone.

"In London," he said, "my one best and only bet is a man named Forsythe, who helps edit the *Pall Mall*. I'll telephone him now. If he can promise me even a shilling a day I'll stay on and starve—but I'll be near you. If Forsythe fails me I shall sail Wednesday."

The telephone call found Forsythe at the *Pall Mall* office. He would be charmed to advise Mr. Lowell on a matter of business. Would he that night dine with Mr. Lowell? He would. And might he suggest that they dine at Pavoni's? He had a special reason for going there, and the dinner would cost only three and six.

"That's reason enough!" Sam told him.

"And don't forget," said Polly when, for the fifth time, Sam rose to go, "that after your dinner you are to look for me at the Duchess of Deptford's dance. I asked her for a card and you will find it at your lodgings. Everybody will be there; but it is a big place—full of dark corners where we can hide."

"Don't hide until I arrive," said Sam. "I shall be very late, as I shall have to walk. After I pay for Forsythe's dinner and for white gloves for your dance I shall not be in a position to hire a taxi. But maybe I shall bring good news. Maybe

Forsythe will give me the job. If he does we will celebrate in champagne."

"You will let me at least pay for the champagne?" begged Polly.

"No," said Sam firmly—"the duchess will furnish that."

When Sam reached his lodgings in Russell Square, which he approached with considerable trepidation, he found Mrs. Wroxton awaiting him. But her attitude no longer was hostile. On the contrary, as she handed him a large, square envelope, decorated with the strawberry leaves of a duke, her manner was humble.

Sam opened the envelope and, with apparent carelessness, stuck it over the fireplace.

"About that back rent," he said; "I have cabled for money, and as soon——"

"I know," said Mrs. Wroxton. "I read the cable." She was reading the card of invitation also. "There's no hurry, sir," protested Mrs. Wroxton. "Any of my young gentlemen who is made welcome at Deptford House is made welcome here!"

"Credit, Mrs. Wroxton," observed Sam, "is better than cash. If you have only cash you spend it and nothing remains. But with credit you can continue indefinitely to—to——"

"So you can!" exclaimed Mrs. Wroxton enthusiastically. "Stay as long as you like, Mr. Lowell."

At Pavoni's Sam found Forsythe already seated and, with evident interest, observing the scene of gayety before him. The place was new to Sam, and after the darkness and snow of the streets it appeared both cheerful and resplendent. It was brilliantly lighted; a ceiling of gay panels picked out with gold, and red plush sofas, backed against walls hung with mirrors and faced by rows of marble-topped tables, gave it an air of the Continent.

Sam surrendered his hat and coat to the waiter. The hat was a soft Alpine one of green felt. The waiter hung it where Sam could see it, on one of many hooks that encircled a gilded pillar.

After two courses had been served Forsythe said:

"I hope you don't object to this place. I had a special reason for wishing to be here on this particular night. I wanted to be in at the death!"

"Whose death?" asked Sam. "Is the dinner as bad as that?"

Forsythe leaned back against the mirror behind them and, bringing his shoulder close to Sam's, spoke in a whisper.

"As you know," he said, "to-day the delegates sign the Treaty of London. It still must receive the signatures of the Sultan and the three kings; and they will sign it. But until they do, what the terms of the treaty are no one can find out."

"I'll bet the *Times* finds out!" said Sam.

"That's it!" returned Forsythe. "Hertz, the man who is supposed to be selling the secrets of the conference to the *Times*, dines here. To-night is his last chance. If to-night he can slip the *Times* a copy of the Treaty of London without being caught, and the *Times* has the courage to publish it, it will be the biggest newspaper sensation of modern times; and it will either cause a financial panic all over Europe—or prevent one. The man they suspect is facing us. Don't look now, but in a minute you will see him sitting alone at a table on the right of the middle pillar. The people at the tables nearest him—even the women—are detectives. His waiter is in the employ of Scotland Yard. The maître d'hôtel, whom you will see always hovering round his table, is a police agent lent by Bulgaria. For the Allies are even more anxious to stop the leak than we are. We are interested only as their hosts; with them it is a matter of national life or death. A week ago

one of our own inspectors tipped me off to what is going on, and every night since then I've dined here, hoping to see something suspicious."

"Have you?" asked Sam.

"Only this," whispered Forsythe—"on four different nights I've recognized men I know are on the staff of the *Times*, and on the other nights men I don't know may have been here. But after all that proves nothing, for this place is a resort of newspaper writers and editors—and the *Times* men's being here may have been only a coincidence."

"And Hertz?" asked Sam—"what does he do?"

The Englishman exclaimed with irritation.

"Just what you see him doing now!" he protested. "He eats his dinner! Look at him!" he commanded. "Of all in the room he's the least concerned."

Sam looked and saw the suspected Adolf Hertz dangling a mass of macaroni on the end of his fork. Sam watched him until it disappeared.

"Maybe that's a signal!" suggested Sam. "Maybe everything he does is part of a cipher code! He gives the signals and the *Times* men read them and write them down."

"A man would have a fine chance to write anything down in this room!" said Forsythe.

"But maybe," persisted Sam, "when he makes those strange movements with his lips he is talking to a confederate who can read the lip language. The confederate writes it down at the office and——"

"Fantastic and extremely improbable!" commented Forsythe. "But, nevertheless, the fact remains, the fellow does communicate with some one from the *Times;* and the police are positive he does it here and that he is doing it now!"

The problem that so greatly disturbed his friend would have more deeply interested Sam had the solving of his own trouble been less imperative. That alone filled his mind. And when the coffee was served and the cigars lit, without beating about the bush Sam asked Forsythe bluntly if on his paper a rising and impecunious genius could find a place. With even less beating about the bush Forsythe assured him he could not. The answer was final, and the disappointment was so keen that Sam soon begged his friend to excuse him, paid his bill, and rose to depart.

"Better wait!" urged Forsythe. "You'll find nothing so good out at a music-hall. This is Houdini getting out of his handcuffs before an audience entirely composed of policemen."

Sam shook his head gloomily.

"I have a few handcuffs of my own to get rid of," he said, "and it makes me poor company."

He bade his friend good night and, picking his way among the tables, moved toward the pillar on which the waiter had hung his hat. The pillar was the one beside which Hertz was sitting, and as Sam approached the man he satisfied his curiosity by a long look. Under the glance Hertz lowered his eyes and fixed them upon his newspaper. Sam retrieved his hat and left the restaurant.

His mind immediately was overcast. He remembered his disappointment and that the parting between himself and Polly was now inevitable. Without considering his direction he turned toward Charing Cross Road. But he was not long allowed to meditate undisturbed.

He had only crossed the little street that runs beside the restaurant and passed into the shadow of the National Gallery when, at the base of the Irving Memorial, from each side he was fiercely attacked. A young man of eminently respectable appearance kicked his legs from under him, and another of equally impeccable exterior made an honest effort to knock off his head.

Sam plunged heavily to the sidewalk. As he sprawled forward his hat fell under him and in his struggle to rise was hidden by the skirts of his

greatcoat. That, also, he had fallen heavily upon his hat with both knees Sam did not know. The strange actions of his assailants enlightened him. To his surprise, instead of continuing their assault or attempting a raid upon his pockets, he found them engaged solely in tugging at the hat. And so preoccupied were they in this that, though still on his knees, Sam was able to land some lusty blows before a rush of feet caused the young men to leap to their own and, pursued by several burly forms, disappear in the heart of the traffic.

Sam rose and stood unsteadily. He found himself surrounded by all of those who but a moment before he had left contentedly dining at Pavoni's. In an excited circle waiters and patrons of the restaurant, both men and women, stood in the falling snow, bareheaded, coatless, and cloakless, staring at him. Forsythe pushed them aside and took Sam by the arm.

"What happened?" demanded Sam.

"You ought to know," protested Forsythe. "You started it! The moment you left the restaurant two men grabbed their hats and jumped after you; a dozen other men, without waiting for hats, jumped after them. The rest of us got out just as the two men and the detectives dived into the traffic."

A big man, with an air of authority, drew Sam to one side.

"Did they take anything from you, sir?" he asked.

"I've nothing they could take," said Sam. "And they didn't try to find out. They just knocked me down."

Forsythe turned to the big man.

"This gentleman is a friend of mine, inspector," he said. "He is a stranger in town and was at Pavoni's only by accident."

"We might need his testimony," suggested the official.

Sam gave his card to the inspector and then sought refuge in a taxicab. For the second time he bade his friend good night.

"And when next we dine," he called to him in parting, "choose a restaurant where the detective service is quicker!"

Three hours later, brushed and repaired by Mrs. Wroxton, and again resplendent, Sam sat in a secluded corner of Deptford House and bade Polly a long farewell. It was especially long owing to the unusual number of interruptions; for it was evident that Polly had many friends in London, and that not to know the Richest One in America and her absurd mother, and the pompous, self-satisfied

father, argued oneself nobody. But finally the duchess carried Polly off to sup with her; and as the duchess did not include Sam in her invitation —at least not in such a way that any one could notice it—Sam said good night—but not before he had arranged a meeting with Polly for eleven that same morning. If it was clear, the meeting was to be at the duck pond in St. James's Park; if it snowed, at the National Gallery in front of the Age of Innocence.

After robbing the duchess of three suppers, Sam descended to the hall and from an attendant received his coat and hat, which latter the attendant offered him with the inside of the hat showing. Sam saw in it the trademark of a foreign maker.

"That's not my hat," said Sam.

The man expressed polite disbelief.

"I found it rolled up in the pocket of your great-coat, sir," he protested.

The words reminded Sam that on arriving at Deptford House he had twisted the hat into a roll and stuffed it into his overcoat pocket.

"Quite right," said Sam. But it was not his hat; and with some hope of still recovering his property he made way for other departing guests and at one side waited.

For some clew to the person he believed was now wearing his hat, Sam examined the one in his hand. Just showing above the inside band was something white. Thinking it might be the card of the owner, Sam removed it. It was not a card, but a long sheet of thin paper, covered with typewriting, and many times folded. Sam read the opening paragraph. Then he backed suddenly toward a great chair of gold and velvet, and fell into it.

He was conscious the attendants in pink stockings were regarding him askance; that, as they waited in the draughty hall for cars and taxis, the noble lords in stars and ribbons, the noble ladies in tiaras and showing much-furlined galoshes, were discussing his strange appearance. They might well believe the youth was ill; they might easily have considered him intoxicated. Outside rose the voices of servants and police calling the carriages. Inside other servants echoed them.

"The Duchess of Sutherland's car!" they chanted. "Mrs. Trevor Hill's carriage! The French ambassador's carriage! Baron Haussmann's car!"

Like one emerging from a trance, Sam sprang upright. A little fat man, with mild blue eyes and curly red hair, was shyly and with murmured

apologies pushing toward the exit. Before he gained it Sam had wriggled a way to his elbow.

"Baron Haussmann!" he stammered. "I must speak to you. It's a matter of gravest importance. Send away your car," he begged, "and give me five minutes."

The eyes of the little fat man opened wide in surprise, almost in alarm. He stared at Sam reprovingly.

"Impossible!" he murmured. "I—I do not know you."

"This is a letter of introduction," said Sam. Into the unwilling fingers of the banker he thrust the folded paper. Bending over him, he whispered in his ear. "That," said Sam, "is the Treaty of London!"

The alarm of Baron Haussmann increased to a panic.

"Impossible!" he gasped. And, with reproach, he repeated: "I do not know you, sir! I do not know you!"

At that moment, towering above the crush, appeared the tall figure of Senator Seward. The rich man of the New World and the rich man of Europe knew each other only by sight. But, upon seeing Sam in earnest converse with the great banker, the senator believed that without appear-

ing to seek it he might through Sam effect a meeting. With a hearty slap on the shoulder he greeted his fellow countryman.

"Halloo, Sam!" he cried genially. "You walking home with me?"

Sam did not even turn his head.

"No!" he snapped. "I'm busy. Go 'way!"

Crimson, the senator disappeared. Baron Haussmann regarded the young stranger with amazed interest.

"You know him!" he protested. "He called you Sam!"

"Know him?" cried Sam impatiently. "I've *got* to know him! He's going to be my father-in-law."

The fingers of the rich man clutched the folded paper as the claws of a parrot cling to the bars of his cage. He let his sable coat slip into the hands of a servant; he turned back toward the marble staircase.

"Come!" he commanded.

Sam led him to the secluded corner Polly and he had left vacant and told his story.

"So, it is evident," concluded Sam, "that each night some one in the service of the *Times* dined at Pavoni's, and that his hat was the same sort of hat as the one worn by Hertz; and each night,

inside the lining of his hat, Hertz hid the report of that day's proceedings. And when the *Times* man left the restaurant he exchanged hats with Hertz. But to-night—I got Hertz's hat and with it the treaty!"

In perplexity the blue eyes of the little great man frowned.

"It is a remarkable story," he said.

"You mean you don't believe me!" retorted Sam. "If I had financial standing—if I had credit—if I were not a stranger—you would not hesitate."

Baron Haussmann neither agreed nor contradicted. He made a polite and deprecatory gesture. Still in doubt, he stared at the piece of white paper. Still deep in thought, he twisted and creased between his fingers the Treaty of London!

Returning with the duchess from supper, Polly caught sight of Sam and, with a happy laugh, ran toward him. Seeing he was not alone, she halted and waved her hand.

"Don't forget!" she called. "At eleven!"

She made a sweet and lovely picture. Sam rose and bowed.

"I'll be there at ten," he answered.

With his mild blue eyes the baron followed Polly

until she had disappeared. Then he turned and smiled at Sam.

"Permit me," he said, "to offer you my felicitations. Your young lady is very beautiful and very good." Sam bowed his head. "If she trusts you," murmured the baron, "I think I can trust you too."

"How wonderful is credit!" exclaimed Sam. "I was just saying so to my landlady. If you have only cash you spend it and nothing remains. But with credit you can——"

"How much," interrupted the banker, "do you want for this?"

Sam returned briskly to the business of the moment.

"To be your partner," he said—"to get half of what you make out of it."

The astonished eyes of the baron were large with wonder. Again he reproved Sam.

"What I shall make out of it?" he demanded incredulously. "Do you know how much I shall make out of it?"

"I cannot even guess," said Sam; "but I want half."

The baron smiled tolerantly.

"And how," he asked, "could you possibly know what I give you is really half?"

In his turn, Sam made a deprecatory gesture.

"*Your* credit," said Sam, "is good!"

That morning, after the walk in St. James's Park, when Sam returned with Polly to Claridge's, they encountered her father in the hall. Mindful of the affront of the night before, he greeted Sam only with a scowl.

"Senator," cried Sam happily, "you must be the first to hear the news! Polly and I are going into partnership. We are to be married."

This time Senator Seward did not trouble himself even to tell Sam he was an ass. He merely grinned cynically.

"Is that *all* your news?" he demanded with sarcasm.

"No," said Sam—"I am going into partnership with Baron Haussmann too!"

THE BURIED TREASURE OF COBRE

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YOUNG EVERETT at last was a minister plenipotentiary. In London as third secretary he had splashed around in the rain to find the ambassador's carriage. In Rome as a second secretary he had served as a clearing-house for the Embassy's visiting-cards; and in Madrid as first secretary he had acted as interpreter for a minister who, though valuable as a national chairman, had much to learn of even his own language. But although surrounded by all the wonders and delights of Europe, although he walked, talked, wined, and dined with statesmen and court beauties, Everett was not happy. He was never his own master. Always he answered the button pressed by the man higher up. Always over him loomed his chief; always, for his diligence and zeal, his chief received credit.

As His Majesty's naval attaché put it sympathetically, "Better be a top-side man on a sampan than First Luff on the *Dreadnought.* Don't be another man's right hand. Be your own right

hand." Accordingly when the State Department offered to make him minister to the Republic of Amapala, Everett gladly deserted the flesh-pots of Europe, and, on muleback over trails in the living rock, through mountain torrents that had never known the shadow of a bridge, through swamp and jungle, rode sunburnt and saddle-sore into his inheritance.

When giving him his farewell instructions, the Secretary of State had not attempted to deceive him.

"Of all the smaller republics of Central America," he frankly told him, "Amapala is the least desirable, least civilized, least acceptable. It offers an ambitious young diplomat no chance. But once a minister, always a minister. Having lifted you out of the secretary class we can't demote you. Your days of deciphering cablegrams are over, and if you don't die of fever, of boredom, or brandy, call us up in a year or two and we will see what we can do."

Everett regarded the Secretary blankly.

"Has the Department *no* interest in Amapala?" he begged. "Is there nothing you want there?"

"There is one thing we very much want," returned the Secretary, "but we can't get it. We want a treaty to extradite criminals."

The young minister laughed confidently.

"Why!" he exclaimed, "that should be easy."

The Secretary smiled.

"You have our full permission to get it," he said. "This department," he explained, "under three administrations has instructed four ministers to arrange such a treaty. The Bankers' Association wants it; the Merchants' Protective Alliance wants it. Amapala is the only place within striking distance of our country where a fugitive is safe. It is the only place where a dishonest cashier, swindler, or felon can find refuge. Sometimes it seems almost as though when a man planned a crime he timed it exactly so as to catch the boat for Amapala. And, once there, we can't lay our hands on him; and, what's more, we can't lay our hands on the money he takes with him. I have no right to make a promise," said the great man, "but the day that treaty is signed you can sail for a legation in Europe. Do I make myself clear?"

"So clear, sir," cried Everett, laughing, "that if I don't arrange that treaty I will remain in Amapala until I do."

"Four of your predecessors," remarked the Secretary, "made exactly the same promise, but none of them got us the treaty."

"Probably none of them remained in Amapala, either," retorted Everett.

"Two did," corrected the Secretary; "as you ride into Camaguay you see their tombstones."

Everett found the nine-day mule-ride from the coast to the capital arduous, but full of interest. After a week at his post he appreciated that until he left it and made the return journey nothing of equal interest was again likely to occur. For life in Camaguay, the capital of Amapala, proved to be one long dreamless slumber. In the morning each of the inhabitants engaged in a struggle to get awake; after the second breakfast he ceased struggling, and for a siesta sank into his hammock. After dinner, at nine o'clock, he was prepared to sleep in earnest, and went to bed. The official life as explained to Everett by Garland, the American consul, was equally monotonous. When President Mendoza was not in the mountains deer-hunting, or suppressing a revolution, each Sunday he invited the American minister to dine at the palace. In return His Excellency expected once a week to be invited to breakfast with the minister. He preferred that the activities of that gentleman should go no further. Life in the diplomatic circle was even less strenuous. Everett was the doyen of the diplomatic corps because he

was the only diplomat. All other countries were represented by consuls who were commission merchants and shopkeepers. They were delighted at having among them a minister plenipotentiary. When he took pity on them and invited them to tea, which invitations he delivered in person to each consul at the door of each shop, the entire diplomatic corps, as the consuls were pleased to describe themselves, put up the shutters, put on their official full-dress uniforms and arrived in a body.

The first week at his post Everett spent in reading the archives of the legation. They were most discouraging. He found that for the sixteen years prior to his arrival the only events reported to the department by his predecessors were revolutions and the refusals of successive presidents to consent to a treaty of extradition. On that point all Amapalans were in accord. Though over-night the government changed hands, though presidents gave way to dictators, and dictators to military governors, the national policy of Amapala continued to be "No extradition!" The ill success of those who had preceded him appalled Everett. He had promised himself by a brilliant assault to secure the treaty and claim the legation in Europe. But the record of sixteen years of fail-

ure caused him to alter his strategy. Instead of an attack he prepared for a siege. He unpacked his books, placed the portrait of his own President over the office desk, and proceeded to make friends with his fellow exiles.

Of the foreign colony in Camaguay some fifty were Americans, and from the rest of the world they were as hopelessly separated as the crew of a light-ship. From the Pacific they were cut off by the Cordilleras, from the Caribbean by a nine-day mule-ride. To the north and south, jungle, forests, swamp-lands, and mountains hemmed them in.

Of the fifty Americans, one-half were constantly on the trail; riding to the coast to visit their plantations, or into the mountains to inspect their mines. When Everett arrived, of those absent the two most important were Chester Ward and Colonel Goddard. Indeed, so important were these gentlemen that Everett was made to understand that, until they approved, his recognition as the American minister was in a manner temporary.

Chester Ward, or "Chet," as the exiles referred to him, was one of the richest men in Amapala, and was engaged in exploring the ruins of the lost city of Cobre, which was a one-hour ride from

the capital. Ward possessed the exclusive right to excavate that buried city and had held it against all comers. The offers of American universities, of archæological and geographical societies that also wished to dig up the ancient city and decipher the hieroglyphs on her walls, were met with a curt rebuff. That work, the government of Amapala would reply, was in the trained hands of Señor Chester Ward. In his chosen effort the government would not disturb him, nor would it permit others coming in at the eleventh hour to rob him of his glory. This Everett learned from the consul, Garland.

"Ward and Colonel Goddard," the consul explained, "are two of five countrymen of ours who run the American colony, and, some say, run the government. The others are Mellen, who has the asphalt monopoly; Jackson, who is building the railroads, and Major Feiberger, of the San José silver-mines. They hold monopolies and pay President Mendoza ten per cent of the earnings, and, on the side, help him run the country. Of the five, the Amapalans love Goddard best, because he's not trying to rob them. Instead, he wants to boost Amapala. His ideas are perfectly impracticable, but he doesn't know that, and neither do they. He's a kind of Colonel Mulberry

Sellers and a Southerner. Not the professional sort, that fight elevator-boys because they're colored, and let off rebel yells in rathskellers when a Hungarian band plays 'Dixie,' but the sort you read about and so seldom see. He was once State Treasurer of Alabama."

"What's he doing down here?" asked the minister.

"Never the same thing two months together," the consul told him; "railroads, mines, rubber. He says all Amapala needs is developing."

As men who can see a joke even when it is against themselves, the two exiles smiled ruefully.

"That's all it needs," said Everett.

For a moment the consul regarded him thoughtfully.

"I might as well tell you," he said, "you'll learn it soon enough anyway, that the men who will keep you from getting your treaty are these five, especially old man Goddard and Ward."

Everett exclaimed indignantly:

"Why should *they* interfere?"

"Because," explained the consul, "they are fugitives from justice, and they don't want to go home. Ward is wanted for forgery or some polite crime, I don't know which. And Colonel Goddard for appropriating the State funds of Alabama.

Ward knew what he was doing and made a lot out of it. He's still rich. No one's weeping over *him*. Goddard's case is different. He was imposed on and made a catspaw. When he was State treasurer the men who appointed him came to him one night and said they must have some of the State's funds to show a bank examiner in the morning. They appealed to him on the ground of friendship, as the men who'd given him his job. They would return the money the next evening. Goddard believed they would. They didn't, and when some one called for a show-down the colonel was shy about fifty thousand dollars of the State's money. He lost his head, took the boat out of Mobile to Porto Cortez, and hid here. He's been here twenty years and all the Amapalans love him. He's the adopted father of their country. They're so afraid he'll be taken back and punished that they'll never consent to an extradition treaty even if the other Americans, Mellen, Jackson, and Feiberger, weren't paying them big money *not* to consent. President Mendoza himself told me that as long as Colonel Goddard honored his country by remaining in it, he was his guest, and he would never agree to extradition. 'I could as soon,' he said, 'sign his death-warrant.'"

Everett grinned dismally.

"That's rather nice of them," he said, "but it's hard on me. But," he demanded, "why Ward? What has he done for Amapala? Is it because of Cobre, because of his services as an archæologist?"

The consul glanced around the patio and dragged his chair nearer to Everett.

"This is my own dope," he whispered; "it may be wrong. Anyway, it's only for your private information."

He waited until, with a smile, Everett agreed to secrecy.

"Chet Ward," protested the consul, "is no more an archæologist than I am! He *talks* well about Cobre, and he ought to, because every word he speaks is cribbed straight from Hauptmann's monograph, published in 1855. And he *has* dug up something at Cobre; something worth a darned sight more than stone monkeys and carved altars. But his explorations are a bluff. They're a blind to cover up what he's really after; what I think he's found!"

As though wishing to be urged, the young man paused, and Everett nodded for him to continue. He was wondering whether life in Amapala might not turn out to be more interesting than at first it had appeared, or whether Garland was not a most charming liar.

"Ward visits the ruins every month," continued Garland. "But he takes with him only two mule-drivers to cook and look after the pack-train, and he doesn't let even the drivers inside the ruins. He remains at Cobre three or four days and, to make a show, fills his saddle-bags with broken tiles and copper ornaments. He turns them over to the government, and it dumps them in the back yard of the palace. You can't persuade me that he holds his concession with that junk. He's found something else at Cobre and he shares it with Mendoza, and I believe it's gold."

The minister smiled delightedly.

"What kind of gold?"

"Maybe in the rough," said the consul. "But I prefer to think it's treasure. The place is full of secret chambers, tombs, and passageways cut through the rock, deep under the surface. I believe Ward has stumbled on some vault where the priests used to hide their loot. I believe he's getting it out bit by bit and going shares with Mendoza."

"If that were so," ventured Everett, "why wouldn't Mendoza take it all?"

"Because Ward," explained the consul, "is the only one who knows where it is. The ruins cover two square miles. You might search for years.

They tried to follow and spy on him, but Ward was too clever for them. He turned back at once. If they don't take what he gives, they get nothing. So they protect him from real explorers and from extradition. The whole thing is unfair. A real archæologist turned up here a month ago. He had letters from the Smithsonian Institute and several big officials at Washington, but do you suppose they would let him so much as smell of Cobre? Not they! Not even when I spoke for him as consul. Then he appealed to Ward, and Ward turned him down hard. You were arriving, so he's hung on here hoping you may have more influence. His name is Peabody; he's a professor, but he's young and full of 'get there,' and he knows more about the ruins of Cobre *now* than Ward does after having them all to himself for two years. He's good people and I hope you'll help him."

Everett shook his head doubtfully.

"If the government has given the concession to him," he pointed out, "no matter who Ward may be, or what its motives were for giving it to him, I can't ask it to break its promise. As an American citizen Ward is as much entitled to my help—officially—as Professor Peabody, whatever his standing."

"Ward's a forger," protested Garland, "a fugitive from justice; and Peabody is a scholar and a gentleman. I'm not keen about dead cities myself—this one we're in now is dead enough for me —but if civilization is demanding to know what Cobre was like eight hundred years ago, civilization is entitled to find out, and Peabody seems the man for the job. It's a shame to turn *him* down for a gang of grafters."

"Tell him to come and talk to me," said the minister.

"He rode over to the ruins of Copan last week," explained Garland, "where the Harvard expedition is. But he's coming back to-morrow on purpose to see you."

The consul had started toward the door when he suddenly returned.

"And there's some one else coming to see you," he said. "Some one," he added anxiously, "you want to treat right. That's Monica Ward. She's Chester Ward's sister, and you mustn't get her mixed up with anything I told you about her brother. She's coming to ask you to help start a Red Cross Society. She was a volunteer nurse in the hospital in the last two revolutions, and what she saw makes her want to be sure she won't see it again. She's taught the native ladies the 'first

aid' drill, and they expect you to be honorary president of the society. You'd better accept."

Shaking his head, Garland smiled pityingly upon the new minister.

"You've got a swell chance to get your treaty," he declared. "Monica is *another* one who will prevent it."

Everett sighed patiently.

"What," he demanded, "might *her* particular crime be; murder, shoplifting, treason——"

"If her brother had to leave this country," interrupted Garland, "she'd leave with him. And the people don't want that. Her pull is the same as old man Goddard's. Everybody loves him and everybody loves her. I love her," exclaimed the consul cheerfully; "the President loves her, the Sisters in the hospital, the chain-gang in the street, the washerwomen in the river, the palace guard, everybody in this flea-bitten, God-forsaken country loves Monica Ward—and when you meet her you will, too."

Garland had again reached the door to the outer hall before Everett called him back.

"If it is not a leading question," asked the minister, "what little indiscretion in *your* life brought you to Amapala?"

Garland grinned appreciatively.

"You mustn't get her mixed up with anything I told you about her brother"

"I know they sound a queer lot," he assented, "but when you get to know 'em, you like 'em. My own trouble," he added, "was a horse. I never could see why they made such a fuss about him. He was lame when I took him."

Disregarding Garland's pleasantry, for some time His Excellency sat with his hands clasped behind his head, frowning up from the open patio into the hot cloudless sky. On the ridge of his tiled roof a foul buzzard blinked at him from red-rimmed eyes, across the yellow wall a lizard ran for shelter, at his elbow a macaw compassing the circle of its tin prison muttered dreadful oaths. Outside, as the washerwomen beat their linen clubs upon the flat rocks of the river, the hot stale air was spanked with sharp reports. In Camaguay theirs was the only industry, the only sign of cleanliness; and recognizing that another shirt had been thrashed into subjection and rags, Everett winced. No less visibly did his own thoughts cause him to wince. Garland he had forgotten, and he was sunk deep in self-pity. His thoughts were of London, with its world politics, its splendid traditions, its great and gracious ladies; of Paris in the spring sunshine, when he cantered through the Bois; of Madrid, with its pomp and royalty, and the gray walls of its galleries pro-

claiming Murillo and Velasquez. These things he had forsaken because he believed he was ambitious; and behold into what a cul-de-sac his ambition had led him! A comic-opera country that was not comic, but dead and buried from the world; a savage people, unread, unenlightened, unclean; and for society of his countrymen, pitiful derelicts in hiding from the law. In his soul he rebelled. In words he exploded bitterly.

"This is one hell of a hole, Garland," cried the diplomat. His jaws and his eyes hardened. "I'm going back to Europe. And the only way I can go is to get that treaty. I was sent here to get it. Those were my orders. And I'll get it if I have to bribe them out of my own pocket; if I have to outbid Mr. Ward, and send him and your good Colonel Goddard and all the rest of the crew to the jails where they belong!"

Garland heard him without emotion. From long residence near the equator he diagnosed the outbreak as a case of tropic choler, aggravated by nostalgia and fleas.

"I'll bet you don't," he said.

"I'll bet you your passage-money home," shouted Everett, "against my passage-money to Europe."

"Done!" said Garland. "How much time do you want—two years?"

The diplomat exclaimed mockingly:

"Two months!"

"I win now," said the consul. "I'll go home and pack."

The next morning his clerk told Everett that in the outer office Monica Ward awaited him.

Overnight Everett had developed a prejudice against Miss Ward. What Garland had said in her favor had only driven him the wrong way. Her universal popularity he disliked. He argued that to gain popularity one must concede and capitulate. He felt that the sister of an acknowledged crook, no matter how innocent she might be, were she a sensitive woman, would wish to efface herself. And he had found that, as a rule, women who worked in hospitals and organized societies bored him. He did not admire the militant, executive sister. He pictured Miss Ward as probably pretty, but with the coquettish effrontery of the village belle and with the pushing, "good-fellow" manners of the new school. He was prepared either to have her slap him on the back or, from behind tilted eye-glasses, make eyes at him. He was sure she wore eye-glasses, and was large, plump, and Junoesque. With reluc-

tance he entered the outer office. He saw, all in white, a girl so young that she was hardly more than a child, but with the tall, slim figure of a boy. Her face was lovely as the face of a violet, and her eyes were as shy. But shy not through lack of confidence in Everett, nor in any human being, but in herself. They seemed to say, "I am a very unworthy, somewhat frightened young person; but you, who are so big and generous, will overlook that, and you are going to be my friend. Indeed, I see you *are* my friend."

Everett stood quite still. He nodded gloomily.

"Garland was right," he exclaimed; "I *do!*"

The young lady was plainly distressed.

"Do what?" she stammered.

"Some day I will tell you," said the young man. "Yes," he added, without shame, "I am afraid I will." He bowed her into the inner office.

"I am sorry," apologized Monica, "but I am come to ask a favor—two favors; one of you and one of the American minister."

Everett drew his armchair from his desk and waved Monica into it.

"I was sent here," he said, "to do exactly what you want. The last words the President addressed to me were, 'On arriving at your post report to Miss Monica Ward.'"

"Some day I will tell you," said the young man

Fearfully, Monica perched herself on the edge of the armchair; as though for protection she clasped the broad table before her.

"The favor I want," she hastily assured him, "is not for myself."

"I am sorry," said Everett, "for it is already granted."

"You are very good," protested Monica.

"No," replied Everett, "I am only powerful. I represent ninety-five million Americans, and they are all entirely at your service. So is the army and navy."

Monica smiled and shook her head. The awe she felt was due an American minister was rapidly disappearing, and in Mr. Everett himself her confidence was increasing. The other ministers plenipotentiary she had seen at Camaguay had been old, with beards like mountain-goats, and had worn linen dusters. They always were very red in the face and very damp. Monica decided Mr. Everett also was old; she was sure he must be at least thirty-five; but in his silk pongee and pipe-clayed tennis-shoes he was a refreshing spectacle. Just to look at him turned one quite cool.

"We have a very fine line of battle-ships this morning at Guantanamo," urged Everett; "if you want one I'll cable for it."

Monica laughed softly. It was good to hear nonsense spoken. The Amapalans had never learned it, and her brother said just what he meant and no more.

"Our sailors *were* here once," Monica volunteered. She wanted Mr. Everett to know he was not entirely cut off from the world. "During the revolution," she explained. "We were so glad to see them; they made us all feel nearer home. They set up our flag in the plaza, and the color-guard let me photograph it, with them guarding it. And when they marched away the archbishop stood on the cathedral steps and blessed them, and we rode out along the trail to where it comes to the jungle. And then we waved good-by, and they cheered us. We all cried."

For a moment, quite unconsciously, Monica gave an imitation of how they all cried. It made the appeal of the violet eyes even more disturbing.

"Don't you love our sailors?" begged Monica.

Fearful of hurting the feelings of others, she added hastily, "And, of course, our marines, too."

Everett assured her if there was one thing that meant more to him than all else, it was an American bluejacket, and next to him an American leatherneck.

It took a long time to arrange the details of the Red Cross Society. In spite of his reputation for brilliancy, it seemed to Monica Mr. Everett had a mind that plodded. For his benefit it was necessary several times to repeat the most simple proposition. She was sure his inability to fasten his attention on her League of Mercy was because his brain was occupied with problems of state. It made her feel selfish and guilty. When his visitor decided that to explain further was but to waste his valuable time and had made her third effort to go, Everett went with her. He suggested that she take him to the hospital and introduce him to the sisters. He wanted to talk to them about the Red Cross League. It was a charming walk. Every one lifted his hat to Monica; the beggars, the cab-drivers, the barefooted policemen, and the social lights of Camaguay on the sidewalks in front of the cafés rose and bowed.

"It is like walking with royalty!" exclaimed Everett.

While at the hospital he talked to the Mother Superior,—his eyes followed Monica. As she moved from cot to cot he noted how the younger sisters fluttered happily around her, like bridesmaids around a bride, and how as she passed, the eyes of those in the cots followed her jealously,

and after she had spoken with them smiled in content.

"She is good," the Mother Superior was saying, "and her brother, too, is very good."

Everett had forgotten the brother. With a start he lifted his eyes and found the Mother Superior regarding him.

"He is very good," she repeated. "For us, he built this wing of the hospital. It was his money. We should be very sorry if any harm came to Mr. Ward. Without his help we would starve." She smiled, and with a gesture signified the sick. "I mean *they* would starve; they would die of disease and fever." The woman fixed upon him grave, inscrutable eyes. "Will Your Excellency remember?" she said. It was less of a question than a command. "Where the church can forgive—" she paused.

Like a real diplomat Everett sought refuge in mere words.

"The church is all-powerful, Mother," he said. "Her power to forgive is her strongest weapon. I have no such power. It lies beyond my authority. I am just a messenger-boy carrying the wishes of the government of one country to the government of another."

The face of the Mother Superior remained grave, but undisturbed.

"Then, as regards our Mr. Ward," she said, "the wishes of your government are——"

Again she paused; again it was less of a question than a command. With interest Everett gazed at the whitewashed ceiling.

"I have not yet," he said, "communicated them to any one."

That night, after dinner in the patio, he reported to Garland the words of the Mother Superior.

"That was my dream, O Prophet," concluded Everett, "you who can read this land of lotus-eaters, interpret! What does it mean?"

"It only means what I've been telling you," said the consul. "It means that if you're going after that treaty, you've only got to fight the Catholic Church. That's all it means!"

Later in the evening Garland said: "I saw you this morning crossing the plaza with Monica. When I told you everybody in this town loved her, was I right?"

"Absolutely!" assented Everett. "But why didn't you tell me she was a flapper?"

"I don't know what a flapper is," promptly retorted Garland. "And if I did, I wouldn't call Monica one."

"A flapper is a very charming person," protested Everett. "I used the term in its most complimentary sense. It means a girl between

fourteen and eighteen. It's English slang, and in England at the present the flapper is very popular. She is driving her sophisticated elder sister, who has been out two or three seasons, and the predatory married woman to the wall. To men of my years the flapper is really at the dangerous age."

In his bamboo chair Garland tossed violently and snorted.

"I sized you up," he cried, "as a man of the finest perceptions. I was wrong. You don't appreciate Monica! Dangerous! You might as well say God's sunshine is dangerous, or a beautiful flower is dangerous."

Everett shook his head at the other man reproachfully:

"Did you ever hear of a sunstroke?" he demanded. "Don't you know if you smell certain beautiful flowers you die? Can't you grasp any other kind of danger than being run down by a trolley-car? Is the danger of losing one's peace of mind nothing, of being unfaithful to duty, nothing! Is——"

Garland raised his arms.

"Don't shoot!" he begged. "I apologize. You *do* appreciate Monica. You have your consul's permission to walk with her again."

The next day young Professor Peabody called and presented his letters. He was a forceful young man to whom the delays of diplomacy did not appeal, and one apparently accustomed to riding off whatever came in his way. He seemed to consider any one who opposed him, or who even disagreed with his conclusions, as offering a personal affront. With indignation he launched into his grievance.

"These people," he declared, "are dogs in the manger, and Ward is the worst of the lot. He knows no more of archæology than a congressman. The man's a fakir! He showed me a spear-head of obsidian and called it flint; and he said the Aztecs borrowed from the Mayas, and that the Toltecs were a myth. And he got the Aztec solar calendar mixed with the Ahau. He's as ignorant as that."

"I can't believe it!" exclaimed Everett.

"You may laugh," protested the professor, "but the ruins of Cobre hold secrets the students of two continents are trying to solve. They hide the history of a lost race, and I submit it's not proper one man should keep that knowledge from the world, certainly not for a few gold armlets!"

Everett raised his eyes.

"What makes you say *that?*" he demanded.

"I've been kicking my heels in this town for a month," Peabody told him, "and I've talked to the people here, and to the Harvard expedition at Copan, and everybody tells me this fellow has found treasure." The archæologist exclaimed with indignation: "What's gold," he snorted, "compared to the discovery of a lost race?"

"I applaud your point of view," Everett assured him. "I am to see the President to-morrow, and I will lay the matter before him. I'll ask him to give you a look in."

To urge his treaty of extradition was the reason for the audience with the President, and with all the courtesy that a bad case demanded Mendoza protested against it. He pointed out that governments entered into treaties only when the ensuing benefits were mutual. For Amapala in a treaty of extradition he saw no benefit. Amapala was not so far "advanced" as to produce defaulting bank presidents, get-rich-quick promoters, counterfeiters, and thieving cashiers. Her fugitives were revolutionists who had fought and lost, and every one was glad to have them go, and no one wanted them back.

"Or," suggested the President, "suppose I am turned out by a revolution, and I seek asylum in your country? My enemies desire my life. They would ask for my extradition——"

"If the offence were political," Everett corrected, "my government would surrender no one."

"But my enemies would charge me with murder," explained the President. "Remember Castro. And by the terms of the treaty your government would be forced to surrender me. And I am shot against the wall." The president shrugged his shoulders. "That treaty would not be nice for me!"

"Consider the matter as a patriot," said the diplomat. "Is it good that the criminals of my country should make their home in yours? When you are so fortunate as to have no dishonest men of your own, why import ours? We don't seek the individual. We want to punish him only as a warning to others. And we want the money he takes with him. Often it is the savings of the very poor."

The President frowned. It was apparent that both the subject and Everett bored him.

"I name no names," exclaimed Mendoza, "but to those who come here we owe the little railroads we possess. They develop our mines and our coffee plantations. In time they will make this country very modern, very rich. And some you call criminals we have learned to love. Their

past does not concern us. We shut our ears. We do not spy. They have come to us as to a sanctuary, and so long as they claim the right of sanctuary, I will not violate it."

As Everett emerged from the cool, dark halls of the palace into the glare of the plaza he was scowling; and he acknowledged the salute of the palace guard as though those gentlemen had offered him an insult.

Garland was waiting in front of a café and greeted him with a mocking grin.

"Congratulations," he shouted.

"I have still twenty-two days," said Everett.

The aristocracy of Camaguay invited the new minister to formal dinners of eighteen courses, and to picnics less formal. These latter Everett greatly enjoyed, because while Monica Ward was too young to attend the state dinners, she was exactly the proper age for the all-day excursions to the waterfalls, the coffee plantations, and the asphalt lakes. The native belles of Camaguay took no pleasure in riding farther afield than the military parade-ground. Climbing a trail so steep that you viewed the sky between the ears of your pony, or where with both hands you forced a way through hanging vines and creepers, did not appeal. But to Monica, with the seat and balance of a cowboy,

riding astride, with her leg straight and the ball of her foot just feeling the stirrup, these expeditions were the happiest moments in her exile. So were they to Everett; and that on the trail one could ride only in single file was a most poignant regret. In the column the place of honor was next to whoever rode at the head, but Everett relinquished this position in favor of Monica. By this manœuvre she always was in his sight, and he could call upon her to act as his guide and to explain what lay on either hand. His delight and wonder in her grew daily. He found that her mind leaped instantly and with gratitude to whatever was most fair. Just out of reach of her pony's hoofs he pressed his own pony forward, and she pointed out to him what in the tropic abundance about them she found most beautiful. Sometimes it was the tumbling waters of a cataract; sometimes, high in the topmost branches of a ceiba-tree, a gorgeous orchid; sometimes a shaft of sunshine as rigid as a search-light, piercing the shadow of the jungle. At first she would turn in the saddle and call to him, but as each day they grew to know each other better she need only point with her whip-hand and he would answer "Yes," and each knew the other understood.

As a body, the exiles resented Everett. They knew his purpose in regard to the treaty, and for them he always must be the enemy. Even though as a man they might like him, they could not forget that his presence threatened their peace and safety. Chester Ward treated him with impeccable politeness; but, although his house was the showplace of Camaguay, he never invited the American minister to cross the threshold. On account of Monica, Everett regretted this and tried to keep the relations of her brother and himself outwardly pleasant. But Ward made it difficult. To no one was his manner effusive, and for Monica only he seemed to hold any real feeling. The two were alone in the world; he was her only relative, and to the orphan he had been father and mother. When she was a child he had bought her toys and dolls; now, had the sisters permitted, he would have dressed her in imported frocks, and with jewels killed her loveliness. He seemed to understand how to spend his money as little as did the gossips of Camaguay understand from whence it came.

That Monica knew why her brother lived in Camaguay Everett was uncertain. She did not complain of living there, but she was not at rest, and constantly she was asking Everett of foreign

lands. As Everett was homesick for them, he was most eloquent.

"I should like to see them for myself," said Monica, "but until my brother's work here is finished we must wait. And I am young, and after a few years Europe will be just as old. When my brother leaves Amapala, he promises to take me wherever I ask to go: to London, to Paris, to Rome. So I read and read of them; books of history, books about painting, books about the cathedrals. But the more I read the more I want to go at once, and that is disloyal."

"Disloyal?" asked Everett.

"To my brother," explained Monica. "He does so much for me. I should think only of his work. That is all that really counts. For the world is waiting to learn what he has discovered. It is like having a brother go in search of the North Pole. You are proud of what he is doing, but you want him back to keep him to yourself. Is that selfish?"

Everett was a trained diplomat, but with his opinion of Chester Ward he could not think of the answer. Instead, he was thinking of Monica in Europe; of taking her through the churches and galleries which she had seen only in black and white. He imagined himself at her side facing

the altar of some great cathedral, or some painting in the Louvre, and watching her face lighten and the tears come to her eyes, as they did now, when things that were beautiful hurt her. Or he imagined her rid of her half-mourning and accompanying him through a cyclonic diplomatic career that carried them to Japan, China, Persia; to Berlin, Paris, and London. In these imaginings Monica appeared in pongee and a sun-hat riding an elephant, in pearls and satin receiving royalty, in tweed knickerbockers and a woollen jersey coasting around the hairpin curve at Saint Moritz.

Of course he recognized that except as his wife Monica could not accompany him to all these strange lands and high diplomatic posts. And of course that was ridiculous. He had made up his mind for the success of what he called his career, that he was too young to marry; but he was sure, should he propose to marry Monica, every one would say he was too old. And there was another consideration. What of the brother? Would his government send him to a foreign post when his wife was the sister of a man they had just sent to the penitentiary?

He could hear them say in London, "We know your first secretary, but who is *Mrs.* Everett?"

And the American visitor would explain: "She is the sister of 'Inky Dink,' the forger. He is bookkeeping in Sing Sing."

Certainly it would be a handicap. He tried to persuade himself that Monica so entirely filled his thoughts because in Camaguay there was no one else; it was a case of propinquity; her loneliness and the fact that she lay under a shadow for which she was not to blame appealed to his chivalry. So, he told himself, in thinking of Monica except as a charming companion, he was an ass. And then, arguing that in calling himself an ass he had shown his saneness and impartiality, he felt justified in seeing her daily.

One morning Garland came to the legation to tell Everett that Peabody was in danger of bringing about international complications by having himself thrust into the cartel.

"If he qualifies for this local jail," said Garland, "you will have a lot of trouble setting him free. You'd better warn him it's easier to keep out than to get out."

"What has he been doing?" asked the minister.

"Poaching on Ward's ruins," said the consul. "He certainly is a hustler. He pretends to go to Copan, but really goes to Cobre. Ward had him followed and threatened to have him arrested.

Peabody claims any tourist has a right to visit the ruins so long as he does no excavating. Ward accused him of exploring the place by night and taking photographs by flash-light of the hieroglyphs. He's put an armed guard at the ruins, and he told Peabody they are to shoot on sight. So Peabody went to Mendoza and said if anybody took a shot at *him* he'd bring war-ships down here and blow Amapala off the map."

"A militant archæologist," said Everett, "is something new. Peabody is too enthusiastic. He and his hieroglyphs are becoming a bore."

He sent for Peabody and told him unless he curbed his spirit his minister could not promise to keep him out of a very damp and dirty dungeon.

"I *am* too enthusiastic," Peabody admitted, "but to me this fellow Ward is like a red flag to the bull. His private graft is holding up the whole scientific world. He won't let us learn the truth, and he's too ignorant to learn it himself. Why, he told me Cobre dated from 1578 when Palacio wrote of it to Philip the Second, not knowing that in that very letter Palacio states that he found Cobre in ruins. Is it right a man as ignorant——"

Everett interrupted by levelling his finger.

"You," he commanded, "keep out of those ruins! My dear professor," he continued reproachfully, "you are a student, a man of peace. Don't try to wage war on these Amapalans. They're lawless, they're unscrupulous. So is Ward. Besides, you are in the wrong, and if they turn ugly, your minister cannot help you." He shook his head and smiled doubtfully. "I can't understand," he exclaimed, "why you're so keen. It's only a heap of broken pottery. Sometimes I wonder if your interest in Cobre is that only of the archæologist."

"What other interest——" demanded Peabody.

"Doesn't Ward's buried treasure appeal at all?" asked the minister. "I mean, of course, to your imagination. It does to mine."

The young professor laughed tolerantly.

"Buried treasure!" he exclaimed. "If Ward has found treasure, and I think he *has*, he's welcome to it. What we want is what you call the broken pottery. It means nothing to you, but to men like myself, who live eight hundred years behind the times, it is much more precious than gold."

A few moments later Professor Peabody took his leave, and it was not until he had turned the corner of the Calle Morazan that he halted and,

like a man emerging from water, drew a deep breath.

"Gee!" muttered the distinguished archæologist, "that was a close call!"

One or two women had loved Everett, and after five weeks, in which almost daily he had seen Monica, he knew she cared for him. This discovery made him entirely happy and filled him with dismay. It was a complication he had not foreseen. It left him at the parting of two ways, one of which he must choose. For his career he was willing to renounce marriage, but now that Monica loved him, even though he had consciously not tried to make her love him, had he the right to renounce it for her also? He knew that the difference between Monica and his career lay in the fact that he loved Monica and was in love with his career. Which should he surrender? Of this he thought long and deeply, until one night, without thinking at all, he chose.

Colonel Goddard had given a dance, and, as all invited were Americans, the etiquette was less formal than at the gatherings of the Amapalans. For one thing, the minister and Monica were able to sit on the veranda overlooking the garden without his having to fight a duel in the morning.

It was not the moonlight, or the music, or the

palms that made Everett speak. It was simply the knowledge that it was written, that it had to be. And he heard himself, without prelude or introduction, talking easily and assuredly of the life they would lead as man and wife. From this dream Monica woke him. The violet eyes were smiling at him through tears.

"When you came," said the girl, "and I loved you, I thought *that* was the greatest happiness. Now that I know you love me I ask nothing more. And I can bear it."

Everett felt as though an icy finger had moved swiftly down his spine. He pretended not to understand.

"Bear what?" he demanded roughly.

"That I cannot marry you," said the girl. "Even had you not asked me, in loving you I would have been happy. Now that I know you thought of me as your wife, I am proud. I am grateful. And the obstacle——"

Everett laughed scornfully.

"There is no obstacle."

Monica shook her head. Unafraid, she looked into his eyes, her own filled with her love for him.

"Don't make it harder," she said. "My brother is hiding from the law. What he did I don't know. When it happened I was at the con-

vent, and he did not send for me until he had reached Amapala. I never asked why we came, but were I to marry you, with your name and your position, every one else would ask. And the scandal would follow you; wherever you went it would follow; it would put an end to your career."

His career, now that Monica urged it as her rival, seemed to Everett particularly trivial.

"I don't know what your brother did either," he said. "His sins are on his own head. They're not on yours, not on mine. I don't judge him; neither do I intend to let him spoil my happiness. Now that I have found you I will never let you go."

Sadly Monica shook her head and smiled.

"When you leave here," she said, "for some new post, you won't forget me, but you'll be grateful that I let you go alone; that I was not a drag on you. When you go back to your great people and your proud and beautiful princesses, all this will seem a strange dream, and you will be glad you are awake—and free."

"The idea of marrying you, Monica," said Everett, "is not new. It did not occur to me only since we moved out here into the moonlight. Since I first saw you I've thought of you, and only of you. I've thought of you with me in

every corner of the globe, as my wife, my sweetheart, my partner, riding through jungles as we ride here, sitting opposite me at our own table, putting the proud and beautiful princesses at their ease. And in all places, at all moments, you make all other women tawdry and absurd. And I don't think you are the most wonderful person I ever met because I love you, but I love you because you are the most wonderful person I ever met."

"I am young," said Monica, "but since I began to love you I am very old. And I see clearly that it cannot be."

"Dear heart," cried Everett, "that is quite morbid. What the devil do I care what your brother has done! I am not marrying your brother."

For a long time, leaning forward with her elbows on her knees and her face buried in her hands, the girl sat silent. It was as though she were praying. Everett knew it was not of him, but of her brother, she was thinking, and his heart ached for her. For him to cut the brother out of his life was not difficult; what it meant to her he could guess.

When the girl raised her eyes they were eloquent with distress.

"He has been so good to me," she said; "always so gentle. He has been mother and father to me. He is the first person I can remember. When I was a child he put me to bed, he dressed me, and comforted me. When we became rich there was nothing he did not wish to give me. I cannot leave him. He needs me more than ever I needed him. I am all he has. And there is this besides. Were I to marry, of all the men in the world it would be harder for him if I married you. For if you succeed in what you came here to do, the law will punish him, and he will know it was through you he was punished. And even between you and me there always would be that knowledge, that feeling."

"That is not fair," cried Everett. "I am not an individual fighting less fortunate individuals. I am an insignificant wheel in a great machine. You must not blame me because I——"

With an exclamation the girl reproached him.

"Because you do your duty!" she protested. "Is that fair to me? If for my sake or my brother you failed in your duty, if you were less vigilant, less eager, even though we suffer, I could not love you."

Everett sighed happily.

"As long as you love me," he said, "neither your brother nor any one else can keep us apart."

"My brother," said the girl, as though she were pronouncing a sentence, "always will keep us apart, and I will always love you."

It was a week before he again saw her, and then the feeling he had read in her eyes was gone—or rigorously concealed. Now her manner was that of a friend, of a young girl addressing a man older than herself, one to whom she looked up with respect and liking, but with no sign of any feeling deeper or more intimate. It upset Everett completely. When he pleaded with her, she asked:

"Do you think it is easy for me? But—" she protested, "I know I am doing right. I am doing it to make you happy."

"You are succeeding," Everett assured her, "in making us both damned miserable."

For Everett, in the second month of his stay in Amapala, events began to move quickly. Following the example of two of his predecessors, the Secretary of State of the United States was about to make a grand tour of Central America. He came on a mission of peace and brotherly love, to foster confidence and good-will, and it was secretly hoped that, in the wake of his escort of battleships, trade would follow fast. There would be salutes and visits of ceremony, speeches, banquets, reviews. But in these rejoicings Amapala would have no part.

For, so Everett was informed by cable, unless, previous to the visit of the Secretary, Amapala fell into line with her sister republics and signed a treaty of extradition, from the itinerary of the great man Amapala would find herself pointedly excluded. It would be a humiliation. In the eyes of her sister republics it would place her outside the pale. Everett saw that in his hands his friend the Secretary had placed a powerful weapon; and lost no time in using it. He caught the President alone, sitting late at his dinner, surrounded by bottles, and read to him the Secretary's ultimatum. General Mendoza did not at once surrender. Before he threw over the men who fed him the golden eggs that made him rich, and for whom he had sworn never to violate the right of sanctuary, he first, for fully half an hour, raged and swore. During that time, while Everett sat anxiously expectant, the President paced and repaced the length of the dining-hall. When to relight his cigar, or to gulp brandy from a tumbler, he halted at the table, his great bulk loomed large in the flickering candle-flames, and when he continued his march, he would disappear into the shadows, and only his scabbard clanking on the stone floor told of his presence. At last he halted and shrugged his shoulders so that the tassels of his epaulets tossed like wheat.

"You drive a hard bargain, sir," he said. "And I have no choice. To-morrow bring the treaty and I will sign."

Everett at once produced it and a fountain pen.

"I should like to cable to-night," he urged, "that you have signed. They are holding back the public announcement of the Secretary's route until hearing from Your Excellency. This is only tentative," he pointed out; "the Senate must ratify. But our Senate will ratify it, and when you sign now, it is a thing accomplished."

Over the place at which Everett pointed, the pen scratched harshly; and then, throwing it from him, the President sat in silence. With eyes inflamed by anger and brandy he regarded the treaty venomously. As though loath to let it go, his hands played with it, as a cat plays with the mouse between her paws. Watching him breathlessly, Everett feared the end was not yet. He felt a depressing premonition that if ever the treaty were to reach Washington he best had snatch it and run. Even as he waited, the end came. An orderly, appearing suddenly in the light of the candles, announced the arrival, in the room adjoining, of "The Colonel Goddard and Señor Mellen." They desired an immediate audience. Their business with the President was

most urgent. Whether from Washington their agents had warned them, whether in Camaguay they had deciphered the cablegram from the State Department, Everett could only guess, but he was certain the cause of their visit was the treaty. That Mendoza also believed this was most evident.

Into the darkness, from which the two exiles might emerge, he peered guiltily. With an oath he tore the treaty in half. Crushing the pieces of paper into a ball, he threw it at Everett's feet. His voice rose to a shriek. It was apparent he intended his words to carry to the men outside. Like an actor on a stage he waved his arms.

"*That* is my answer!" he shouted. "Tell your Secretary the choice he offers is an insult! It is blackmail. We will not sign his treaty. We do not desire his visit to our country." Thrilled by his own bravado, his voice rose higher. "Nor," he shouted, "do we desire the presence of his representative. Your usefulness is at an end. You will receive your passports in the morning."

As he might discharge a cook, he waved Everett away. His hand, trembling with excitement, closed around the neck of the brandy-bottle. Everett stooped and secured the treaty. On his return to Washington, torn and rumpled as it

was, it would be his justification. It was his "Exhibit A."

As he approached the legation he saw drawn up in front of it three ponies ready saddled. For an instant he wondered if Mendoza intended further to insult him, if he planned that night to send him under guard to the coast. He determined hotly sooner than submit to such an indignity he would fortify the legation, and defend himself. But no such heroics were required of him. As he reached the door, Garland, with an exclamation of relief, hailed him, and Monica, stepping from the shadow, laid an appealing hand upon his sleeve.

"My brother!" she exclaimed. "The guard at Cobre has just sent word that they found Peabody prowling in the ruins and fired on him. He fired back, and he is still there hiding. My brother and others have gone to take him. I don't know what may happen if he resists. Chester is armed, and he is furious; he is beside himself; he would not listen to me. But he must listen to you. Will you go," the girl begged, "and speak to him; speak to him, I mean," she added, "as the American minister?"

Everett already had his foot in the stirrup. "I'm the American minister only until to-mor-

row," he said. "I've got my walking-papers. But I'll do all I can to stop this to-night. Garland," he asked, "will you take Miss Ward home, and then follow me?"

"If I do not go with you," said Monica, "I will go alone."

Her tone was final. With a clatter of hoofs that woke alarmed echoes in the sleeping streets the three horses galloped abreast toward Cobre. In an hour they left the main trail and at a walk picked their way to where the blocks of stone, broken columns, and crumbling temples of the half-buried city checked the jungle.

The moon made it possible to move in safety, and at different distances the lights of torches told them the man-hunt still was in progress.

"Thank God," breathed Monica, "we are in time."

Everett gave the ponies in care of one of the guards. He turned to Garland.

"Catch up with those lights ahead of us," he said, "and we will join this party to the right. If you find Ward, tell him I forbid him taking the law into his own hands; tell him I will protect his interests. If you meet Peabody, make him give up his gun, and see that the others don't harm him!"

Everett and the girl did not overtake the lights they had seen flashing below them. Before they were within hailing distance, that searching party had disappeared, and still farther away other torches beckoned.

Stumbling and falling, now in pursuit of one will-o'-the-wisp, now of another, they scrambled forward. But always the lights eluded them. From their exertions and the moist heat they were breathless, and their bodies dripped with water. Panting, they halted at the entrance of what once had been a tomb. From its black interior came a damp mist; above them, alarmed by their intrusion, the vampire bats whirled blindly in circles. Monica, who by day possessed some slight knowledge of the ruins, had, in the moonlight, lost all sense of direction.

"We're lost," said Monica, in a low tone. Unconsciously both were speaking in whispers. "I thought we were following what used to be the main thoroughfare of the city; but I have never seen this place before. From what I have read I think we must be among the tombs of the kings."

She was silenced by Everett placing one hand quickly on her arm, and with the other pointing. In the uncertain moonlight she saw moving cau-

tiously away from them, and unconscious of their presence, a white, ghostlike figure.

"Peabody," whispered Everett.

"Call him," commanded Monica.

"The others might hear," objected Everett. "We must overtake him. If we're with him when they meet, they wouldn't dare——"

With a gasp of astonishment, his words ceased.

Like a ghost, the ghostlike figure had vanished.

"He walked through that rock!" cried Monica.

Everett caught her by the wrist. "Come!" he commanded.

Over the face of the rock, into which Peabody had dived as into water, hung a curtain of vines. Everett tore it apart. Concealed by the vines was the narrow mouth to a tunnel; and from it they heard, rapidly lessening in the distance, the patter of footsteps.

"Will you wait," demanded Everett, "or come with me?"

With a shudder of distaste, Monica answered by seizing his hand.

With his free arm Everett swept aside the vines, and, Monica following, they entered the tunnel. It was a passageway cleanly cut through the solid rock and sufficiently wide to permit of their

moving freely. At the farther end, at a distance of a hundred yards, it opened into a great vault, also hollowed from the rock and, as they saw to their surprise, brilliantly lighted.

For an instant, in black silhouette, the figure of Peabody blocked the entrance to this vault, and then, turning to the right, again vanished. Monica felt an untimely desire to laugh. Now that they were on the track of Peabody she no longer feared the outcome of the adventure. In the presence of the American minister and of herself there would be no violence; and as they trailed the archæologist through the tunnel she was reminded of Alice and her pursuit of the white rabbit. This thought, and her sense of relief that the danger was over, caused her to laugh aloud.

They had gained the farther end of the tunnel and the entrance to the vault, when at once her amusement turned to wonder. For the vault showed every evidence of use and of recent occupation. In brackets, and burning brightly, were lamps of modern make; on the stone floor stood a canvas cot, saddle-bags, camp-chairs, and in the centre of the vault a collapsible table. On this were bottles filled with chemicals, trays, and presses such as are used in developing photographs, and apparently hung there to dry, swinging from strings, the proofs of many negatives.

Loyal to her brother, Monica exclaimed indignantly. At the proofs she pointed an accusing finger.

"Look!" she whispered. "This is Peabody's darkroom, where he develops the flash-lights he takes of the hieroglyphs! Chester has a *right* to be furious!"

Impulsively she would have pushed past Everett; but with an exclamation he sprang in front of her.

"No!" he commanded, "come away!"

He had fallen into a sudden panic. His tone spoke of some catastrophe, imminent and overwhelming. Monica followed the direction of his eyes. They were staring in fear at the proofs.

The girl leaned forward; and now saw them clearly.

Each was a United States Treasury note for five hundred dollars.

Around the turn of the tunnel, approaching the vault apparently from another passage, they heard hurrying footsteps; and then, close to them from the vault itself, the voice of Professor Peabody.

It was harsh, sharp, peremptory.

"Hands up!" it commanded. "Drop that gun!"

As though halted by a precipice, the footsteps fell into instant silence. There was a pause, and then the ring of steel upon the stone floor. There was another pause, and Monica heard the voice of her brother. Broken, as though with running, it still retained its level accent, its note of insolence.

"So," it said, "I have caught you?"

Monica struggled toward the lighted vault, but around her Everett threw his arm.

"Come away!" he begged.

Monica fought against the terror of something unknown. She could not understand. They had come only to prevent a meeting between her brother and Peabody; and now that they had met, Everett was endeavoring to escape.

It was incomprehensible.

And the money in the vault, the yellow bills hanging from a cobweb of strings; why should they terrify her; what did they threaten? Dully, and from a distance, Monica heard the voice of Peabody.

"No," he answered; "I have caught *you!* And I've had a hell of a time doing it!"

Monica tried to call out, to assure her brother of her presence. But, as though in a nightmare, she could make no sound. Fingers of fear

gripped at her throat. To struggle was no longer possible.

The voice of Peabody continued:

"Six months ago we traced these bills to New Orleans. So we guessed the plant was in Central America. We knew only one man who could make them. When I found *you* were in Amapala and they said you had struck 'buried treasure' —the rest was easy."

Monica heard the voice of her brother answer with a laugh.

"Easy?" he mocked. "There's no extradition. You can't touch me. You're lucky if you get out of here alive. I've only to raise my voice——"

"And, I'll kill you!"

This was danger Monica could understand. Freed from the nightmare of doubt, with a cry she ran forward. She saw Peabody, his back against a wall, a levelled automatic in his hand; her brother at the entrance to a tunnel like the one from which she had just appeared. His arms were raised above his head. At his feet lay a revolver. For an instant, with disbelief, he stared at Monica, and then, as though assured that it was she, his eyes dilated. In them were fear and horror. So genuine was the agony in the face of the counterfeiter that Everett, who had followed,

turned his own away. But the eyes of the brother and sister remained fixed upon each other, hers, appealingly; his, with despair. He tried to speak, but the words did not come. When he did break the silence his tone was singularly wistful, most tenderly kind.

"Did you hear?" he asked.

Monica slowly bowed her head. With the same note of gentleness her brother persisted:

"Did you *understand!*"

Between them stretched the cobweb of strings hung with yellow certificates; each calling for five hundred dollars, payable in gold. Stirred by the night air from the open tunnels, they fluttered and flaunted.

Against the sight of them, Monica closed her eyes. Heavily, as though with a great physical effort, again she bowed her head.

The eyes of her brother searched about him wildly. They rested on the mouth of the tunnel.

With his lowered arm he pointed.

"Who is that?" he cried.

Instinctively the others turned.

It was for an instant. The instant sufficed.

Monica saw her brother throw himself upon the floor, felt herself flung aside as Everett and the detective leaped upon him; saw her brother

press his hands against his heart, the two men dragging at his arms.

The cavelike room was shaken with a report, an acrid smoke assailed her nostrils. The men ceased struggling. Her brother lay still.

Monica sprang toward the body, but a black wave rose and submerged her. As she fainted, to save herself she threw out her arms, and as she fell she dragged down with her the buried treasure of Cobre.

Stretched upon the stone floor beside her brother she lay motionless. Beneath her, and wrapped about and covering her, as the leaves covered the babes in the wood, was a vast cobweb of yellow bills, each for five hundred dollars, payable in gold.

A month later the harbor of Porto Cortez in Honduras was shaken with the roar of cannon. In comparison, the roaring of all the cannon of all the revolutions that that distressful country ever had known, were like fire-crackers under a barrel.

Faithful to his itinerary, the Secretary of State of the United States was paying his formal visit to Honduras, and the President of that republic, waiting upon the Fruit Company's wharf to greet him, was receiving the salute of the American battle-ships. Back of him, on the wharf, his own

barefooted artillerymen in their turn were saluting, excitedly and spasmodically, the distinguished visitor. As an honor he had at last learned to accept without putting a finger in each ear, the Secretary of State smiled with gracious calm. Less calm was the President of Honduras. He knew something the Secretary did not know. He knew that at any moment a gun of his saluting battery might turn turtle, or blow into the harbor himself, his cabinet, and the larger part of his standing army.

Made fast to the wharf on the side opposite to the one at which the Secretary had landed was one of the Fruit Company's steamers. She was on her way north, and Porto Cortez was a port of call. That her passengers might not intrude upon the ceremonies, her side of the wharf was roped off and guarded by the standing army. But from her decks and from behind the ropes the passengers, with a battery of cameras, were perpetuating the historic scene.

Among them, close to the ropes, viewing the ceremony with the cynical eye of one who in Europe had seen kings and emperors meet upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold, was Everett. He made no effort to bring himself to the attention of his former chief. But when the introductions

were over, the Secretary of State turned his eyes to his fellow countrymen crowding the rails of the American steamer. They greeted him with cheers. The great man raised his hat, and his eyes fell upon Everett. The Secretary advanced quickly, his hand extended, brushing to one side the standing army.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"On my way home, sir," said Everett. "I couldn't leave sooner; there were—personal reasons. But I cabled the department my resignation the day Mendoza gave me my walking-papers. You may remember," Everett added dryly, "the department accepted by cable."

The great man showed embarrassment.

"It was most unfortunate," he sympathized. "We wanted that treaty, and while, no doubt, you made every effort——"

He became aware of the fact that Everett's attention was not exclusively his own. Following the direction of the young man's eyes the Secretary saw on the deck just above them, leaning upon the rail, a girl in deep mourning.

She was very beautiful. Her face was as lovely as a violet and as shy. To the Secretary a beautiful woman was always a beautiful woman. But he had read the papers. Who had not? He was

sure there must be some mistake. This could not be the sister of a criminal; the woman for whom Everett had smashed his career.

The Secretary masked his astonishment, but not his admiration.

"Mrs. Everett?" he asked. His very tone conveyed congratulations.

"Yes," said the ex-diplomat. "Some day I shall be glad to present you."

The Secretary did not wait for an introduction. Raising his eyes to the ship's rail, he made a deep and courtly bow. With a gesture worthy of d'Artagnan, his high hat swept the wharf. The members of his staff, the officers from the warships, the President of Honduras and the members of *his* staff endeavored to imitate his act of homage, and in confusion Mrs. Everett blushed becomingly.

"When I return to Washington," said the Secretary hastily, "come and see me. You are too valuable to lose. Your career——"

Again Everett was looking at his wife. Her distress at having been so suddenly drawn into the lime-light amused him, and he was smiling. Then, as though aware of the Secretary's meaning, he laughed.

"*My dear sir!*" he protested. His tone sug-

gested he was about to add "mind your own business," or "go to the devil."

Instead he said: "I'm not worrying about my career. My career has just begun."

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